

IN THESE TIMES



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A HAWK IN THE ROSE GARDEN

Carter has avoided confrontation on the issues,
but is playing politics with the hostages.



THE INSIDE STORY



The Mohawk Rubber plant in Akron, Ohio, closed in December 1978 with nine days' notice.

Shutdowns inflict massive social cost

By David Moberg

Capitalism thrives, the conservative Joseph Schumpeter argued, on a process of "creative destruction." As the political and trade union furor over factory and office closings has picked up in recent years, a debate of sorts has developed: Is the continual shift of capital from one use or locality to another becoming far more destructive of any useful goods and of popularly supported values and far less creative in anything except in making profit (and perhaps not even that)?

The latest contribution to the discussion is a thick study by economists Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison commissioned by the Progressive Alliance, the national labor, community and public interest coalition assembled by Auto Workers president Douglas Fraser. "Capital and Communities: The Causes and Consequences of Private Disinvestment," leads beyond the immediate issue of shut down workplaces to the more general issues of how capital is allocated, especially how decisions on physical locations are made. Bluestone and Harrison not only reinforce the growing body of literature on the hardships and dis-economies of plant closings but also introduce a range of new, often surprising data and arguments that enrich our understanding of the phenomenon but, unfortunately, also increase the complexity of the issue.

For example, one study they cite suggests that downward occupational mobility after a closing is greatest for professional and managerial employees (although it's unclear who suffers most in all regards). Also, in another surprise, the actual number of plant closings from 1969-1976 was greater in the South than in the North Central region. "Even more dramatically, the rate at which large 'established' manufacturing establishments have shut down—that is, the probability of a shutdown by 1976, of establishments in operation in 1969—was actually higher in the South than in any other part of the country."

But despite the growing complexity of the information on why businesses go where they go (much of it still dreadfully inadequate), Bluestone and Harrison emphasize a number of consistent and often controversial themes.

Capital on the move.

The real problem, they argue, is not simply a moved corporate headquarters from New York or a locked rubber factory in Akron—the tips of the iceberg. It is that capital's ability to shift about has increased greatly. Investment decisions are made with even less recognition of the social and economic consequences than in the past. There are not only shifts from North to South but out of the South and other regions to overseas lo-

cations, not only moves of actual factories but far more important capital shifts, including gradual "disinvestment" in certain industries and regions. Although the greatest problems are faced by workers and communities that lose jobs, the rapid shifts in investment create boomtown difficulties in other areas.

Most economists argue that capital mobility is a sacred underpinning of the whole "creative destruction" process of capitalism, ultimately leading to more efficient use of resources. But Bluestone and Harrison argue that even when the capital shifts or plant closings may bring higher profits for the firm, they frequently produce inefficient allocations of the whole resources of society, particularly because many of the costs involved don't register on the corporate balance sheet. Also, the capital shifts are not simple economic responses to costs and pursuit of profit by freely competitive firms: the shifts also carry great political weight in reshaping the conditions for business, especially since control over capital has become so concentrated.

Businesses want flexible control over their domain. To that end they use their clout to encourage a good "business climate" (usually meaning pro-business, anti-labor state and local governments). They flee from unions. And they seek to reduce the "social wage" that workers receive—unemployment benefits, workmen's compensation, and various other social services, which may give workers more security and weaken the discipline of fear in the workplace.

Bluestone and Harrison argue strenuously that tax breaks and various government giveaways do little in most cases to induce businesses to move to a particular community, although businesses are quite willing to lobby for any reduction in costs. More important, they argue, businesses attack taxes in order to reduce the "social wage" and to eliminate the public programs that have expanded in recent decades. Certainly, however, cutting taxes and redistributing income back to business and away from the public sector is important for the money involved and for the political ideological points as well.

Capital mobility itself is not the villain, Bluestone and Harrison argue, but rather "the accelerating and often heedless speed of capital mobility in today's economy." This change reflects the dramatic transformation of transportation and communications. Corporate managers can easily command a far-flung network. They can maintain parallel production of important items in different factories and different regions. They can shift location of various aspects of the production process as, for example, a product changes from being a novel result of skilled labor to a mass-produced item, subject to international competition, and capable of being made at least in part by low-skilled, ill-paid workers.

Concentrated control.

Control over investment and thus over the shifts in capital—from gradual disinvestment to outright "run-aways"—has become more concentrated. Moreover, the emergence of the conglomerate has further reduced any link between a particular firm and a product or line of products. More than ever, profit targets and growth in the abstract, without much regard to what is being produced, dominate the conglomerate strategy that is also becoming the strategy of all big businesses—General Motors and Exxon as much as Tenneco, LTV or TRW. Fewer decision-makers, ever more remote from the affected communities, flick investments from one place to another, using "creative accounting" that often destroys perfectly sound small businesses as a way of amassing capital for further

takeovers, for growth and for concentration in the divisions that can jump over their "hurdle" rates of profit of 20 or 25 percent return on investment each year.

The consequences of this concentrated power and easy shifting of investment are enormous. Bluestone and Harrison estimate that between 1969 and 1976 at least 15 million jobs were destroyed in the U.S. as a result of shutdowns, an average of 2.5 million jobs a year. In the Frostbelt, 111 jobs were destroyed for every 100 created; in the Sunbelt and Far West 80 were destroyed for every 100 created. The worst villains were the conglomerates with by far the highest relative rates of business closings. Conglomerates and large corporations were responsible for half of all the jobs lost through shutdowns from 1969-76.

Moreover, many of those closed businesses would have done far better and most likely would have survived if they had not been taken over by conglomerates that milked them of cash, saddled them with management or purchasing requirements that served the conglomerate ends but undermined the unit, or simply neglected their needs in favor of more glamorous prospects.

Inadequate as it is, the prevailing public response has been to provide "welfare" or "burial insurance" to affected workers. Bluestone and Harrison argue that is not enough. Public and worker influence on or control of investment decisions is essential. Their proposals to that end include the plant closing legislation before many state legislatures and Congress (notification, compensation, efforts at redevelopment or worker takeover are typical elements), stronger collective bargaining agreements, worker ownership, early warning systems and selective nationalization.

A new study by Karl Frieden, *Workplace Democracy and Productivity* (available from the National Center for Economic Alternatives, 2000 P St., NW, Washington, DC 20036) musters considerable evidence in favor of worker owned and controlled enterprises. Such change in control can often salvage abandoned businesses, especially many victims of conglomerate exploitation. But worker-owned enterprises should not be relegated just to picking up the broken pieces but rather directed to the newer, growing industries as well.

Likewise, a booklet from California Newsreel (630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103) called *Planning Work* provides excellent advice and discussion guides to develop the capacity of workers to detect signs of disinvestment in their workplace and to plan their own alternative strategies for production, much as the Lucas Aerospace workers in England did when faced with massive layoffs and closings.

The lessons are increasingly clear. The labor movement and others interested in community economic stability must work for public, worker and community-oriented control over investment, including the allocation of equity and loans. From the shop floor to the highest reaches of government. This emerging coalition must be vigilant in monitoring where capital is going and to be creative in devising alternative strategies for production and investment. No issue will be more important for the coming decade. Few other major local issues will escape the influence of this debate over capitalism's "creative destruction."

(The full 334-page study is available for \$20 from The Progressive Alliance, 1625 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. A 48-page condensation will be available for \$3.00 in late May from the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, 2000 Florida Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009.)

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Carter takes a stand for votes

By John Judis

THERE IS NOW A WIDESPREAD fear among foreign policy experts that President Jimmy Carter has committed the U.S. to a negotiating posture with the Iranian government that could eventually lead to the death of some of the hostages or to full-scale war. Carter's threat to use military force if the hostages were not released—made during his April 7 and April 17 press conferences—brought opposition from as far afield as Senator Henry Jackson and Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd. "There's too much talk and yakey-yack about possible military action and blockades by a lot of people," Byrd said.

One Senate Foreign Relations Committee member put the case more bleakly. "I'm pretty scared," he said. "Carter has put us on a slippery slope. And I don't know how he is going to get us off."

Perhaps the most eloquent and telling opposition to Carter's Iranian strategy has come from within the foreign policy establishment. Harvard professor of international law Roger Fisher is one of the country's most respected authorities on international negotiations. In an interview with *IN THESE TIMES*, Fisher detailed his misgivings about the Carter policies.

What do you think the effects of President Carter's latest measures—the new sanctions, the threat of military force and the confiscation of frozen Iranian assets—will be on getting the hostages back?

There are two effects. One is to make it in the short run harder for the Iranians to back down. It's more politically costly for anyone in Iran to appear to give in to the American threats. Second, it does make the current situation unpleasant and therefore if they know what will happen to them on the release of the hostages, which we have not clarified, and if that is credibly presented and if that is substantially more attractive than the current situation, then it may have an effect that tends to press toward release of the hostages.

But there hasn't been a clear offer.

That's right. They don't know what will happen to them. They do not know that if they release the hostages tomorrow whether punitive actions will be taken, whether the funds will be released or confiscated, whether the U.S. will resume purchases of oil. They have no idea what will happen to them, and therefore it is very difficult for anyone in the government or in the embassy compound to make a case for releasing the hostages today because the opposition will say, "Even if we ought to release them, then let's at least make sure what is going to happen."

And since we've broken diplomatic relations, communications are rather poor, and since the president purports to bar people from travelling, it makes it hard to clarify what will happen to them. Therefore the threats tend to have a spill-over effect where it looks as though we are punishing them for what they have done and it looks as though we may punish them no matter what they do. Therefore there is no reason to let the hostages go.

What about the threat of military force? Can that help win the release of the hostages?

I was talking with someone yesterday who is in touch with Tehran. You have to be familiar with what it means to die as a martyr in Islam. I'm told that the threat of military force is a kind of great release in Iran. There's a lot of frustration with the revolution and the economy, but

here's a chance for a clean-cut answer. They can stand up to the U.S. as they did to the Shah. So it tends to be seen as a cause to prove themselves.

Also they've decided, I'm told, what to do in the event of direct military action. They will execute those of the hostages they've identified as spies and will not kill the others.

Has freezing the Iranian assets helped at all?

It works as long as you promise to unfreeze them.

But hasn't the administration asked Congress for the power to disperse the assets to families of the hostages and to the Pentagon?

To disperse the assets would reduce any incentive they have to release the hostages.

What about breaking diplomatic relations?

I didn't appreciate it until yesterday [April 21]—how much the Iranians enjoyed it. They were dancing in the streets when they heard we'd broken diplomatic relations because it was understood that we'd given up any chance to run their country through our embassy, which they see as an octopus' tentacles that

have been dominating Iran for the last 25 years. So although it makes it more difficult to communicate, in a sense they see it as a favor we've done to them.

But basically I think that breaking diplomatic relations is a mistaken form of communication. It's cutting the telephone line as a way of sending the message. At the moment, it's a great message, but it's hard to restore diplomatic relations.

Do you think the Carter administration's proposals have almost been designed to fail?

I hate to judge people's intentions? My impression is that one element of it has been concern for the domestic reaction.

Past negotiations have often been conducted without so much publicity. Do you think the administration has been trapped by the intense coverage of the Iranian crisis?

The major reward they [the captors of the hostages] have been getting from stealing them is the publicity. The American media has done more to reward the seizing of the hostages than the U.S. could conceivably do. And television has made hostage-taking a good deal. They've criticized the president, but it's

not the president's fault. It's the media who decided to reward them.

But I think the administration has been concerned to too great an extent about what we should do rather than what the choices look like in Tehran. And I think we are worried about solving our problem rather than solving their problem.

Conflict negotiations require that you jointly sit down and try to solve both problems. Their problem has been trying to get some awareness of their grievances. Their problem is that they don't believe we accept their revolution. We can convince them that we do.

Their problem is that they are worried we are going to try to overthrow the new regime. We can try to convince them that we will not.

Do you think we should give the Iranians the apology they have asked for?

Not because it was asked, but because international law says categorically that whenever there has been an international wrong, an apology is due. It's clear that the U.S. government helped overthrow the Mossadegh regime and that was a violation of international law.

I also think they should apologize to us for their actions. We should exchange apologies. It's no big deal. It's not because they asked for it, but because they are entitled to it. It's just like our promising not to overthrow their government. We should promise it not because they are demanding it but because our UN obligations prevent us from doing it.

Are you pessimistic about the hostages being released soon?

The administration has to assume that they operate on Middle Eastern time. When people asked me in November how many days, I said, "Well the *Pueblo* crew was held for 11 months. I would guess that would be about right." Prisoners of war in North Korea and North Vietnam were held for years. I would think it is a comparable thing.

We've changed the issue from a very good issue, which was, "Can they coerce us by blackmail?" The President has shifted the issue to whether we can coerce them. And there is nothing we can do on that issue. When the question was, "Should we yield to blackmail?" we had the whole world with us. When the question is, "Can we coerce them?" we lose all our supporters. To emphasize our ability to make them do things is a great mistake.

Fisher's analysis suggests that Carter's negotiating posture will, if anything, prolong the captivity of the American hostages. It will also threaten American relations with its NATO allies and Japan, who have been understandably reluctant to go along with Carter's plan of action, and with some Arab countries as well. It may even throw Iran into the arms of the Soviet Union—exactly the outcome most feared by the president's National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.

The only positive outcome could be a short-run boost to Carter's sagging political popularity. Prior to the new sanctions and threats, *Newsweek* and CBS/*New York Times* polls both indicated greater disapproval than approval of Carter's Iran policies. In the *Newsweek* poll, 51 percent said that Carter had not been "tough enough."

As was the case with the SALT II debate, Carter has allowed right-wing politicians to build this hawkish majority by being unwilling or unable to articulate an alternative political perspective. He has then found himself in the position of having to accommodate to this majority or risk electoral defeat.

Meanwhile, the hostages remain prisoners not only of the embassy militants, but of the twists and turns of American presidential politics.

The President's military threat against Iran may help him in the primaries, but it will not speed the release of the hostages.



BAS/ROTHCO



Connecticut demonstrators protesting high oil prices and profits and rallying in support of the recently passed tax. (Right) Conn. Governor, Ella Grasso

STRIKING BACK

Connecticut passes a tax on big oil's profits

By Dan Marshall
and Tom Corrigan

CLEVELAND

FACED WITH A \$150 MILLION budget deficit and steady pressure from citizen and labor organizations, Connecticut recently became the first state to enact a tax on the gross revenues of oil companies operating in the state. The measure imposes a 2 percent tax on the gross receipts of 21 major companies that engage in petroleum refining, marketing and distribution. It is expected to raise over \$40 million per year. Following three-to-one affirmative votes in the Connecticut House and Senate, Governor Ella Grasso signed it into law on April 11 as part of the state's 1981 fiscal year budget.

The tax "signals the beginning of a national trend of citizens and state governments picking up the slack in federal policy and requiring the industry to meet its responsibility to the American people," said Al Driscoll, a leader of the Connecticut Citizen Action Group (CCAG) and co-chair of the Connecticut Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition.

Although sustained citizen agitation played a key role in convincing legislators to approve the bill, the state's budgetary problems and soaring energy prices were also major factors in defusing opposition. When Gov. Grasso began to prepare the state budget last year, she discovered a mammoth revenue deficit that called for substantial service cutbacks or additional taxes. The state's tax structure already was highly regressive: no income tax, a high sales tax (7.5 percent as of July), and high local property taxes.

The oil tax started out as the funding mechanism for a comprehensive energy assistance program last August by Connecticut Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition—a coalition of 25 organizations, the most prominent of which are the Machinists union, the United Auto Workers and the Connecticut Citizen Action Group. Studies of the Hartford area had found that many families would pay at least 45 percent more for energy in 1979 because of heating oil price increases. To compensate, the coalition formulated a legislative package that featured short-term energy assistance loans, an increase in the state's energy conservation program, and supplementary fuel assistance grants. Because the legislature had ad-

jourled without adequately preparing for an expected crisis that winter, C/LEC urged the governor to convene a special fall session to consider these proposals.

The coalition, chaired jointly by Al Driscoll and Lou Kiefer of Machinists' District 91, designed a campaign of sophisticated legal research, traditional lobbying techniques and direct pressure on legislators. Founded in 1971 as an offshoot of Ralph Nader's public interest lobbying network, the CCAG several years ago adopted a community organizing strategy. The group hoped to integrate this work with the oil tax battle.

The coalition planned a major rally and candlelight procession to the state capitol for national "Stop Big Oil" day on Oct. 17, 1979. To build momentum for that event, oil company offices be-

came targets for citizen demonstrations. At the same time, local CCAG chapters conducted "accountability sessions" with their state legislators to gain support for the C/LEC proposals. At an early meeting with coalition representatives, the governor seemed cool to the proposal for a special session. But shortly before the Oct. 17 rally (which drew 600 people), she announced that she would call the legislature into emergency session in November.

During the special session, C/LEC and CCAG members lobbied steadily. But while the legislature raised the level of energy assistance and funded a weatherization program, the oil tax proposal was shunted off to a committee for study and consideration in the 1980 session.

Oil company opposition had been

strong since an impressive array of executives fired the opening shots in a three-month campaign of threats to leave the state, pass the tax through to consumers and take their case to the Supreme Court while holding badly-needed revenue in escrow. Backed by extensive research and advice from academic experts, the coalition countered their claims.

Then in late January, Gov. Grasso, faced with a choice between a huge budget deficit or substantial service cutbacks that would inhibit her effort to deliver the state to President Carter in the fall, agreed to submit a 1 percent version of the tax as part of her budget message.

When the final hearings took place in late March in front of the Finance Committee, the tax seemed assured of passage. The hearing room was packed. Through some deft parliamentary maneuvers, the committee's Democratic leaders added some strengthening amendments to counter oil company attacks, and increased the tax levy to 2 percent. In almost anti-climactic fashion, both houses approved the measure by substantial margins during the second week of April.

A week after the victory, Ralph Nader called the oil tax a "good example of how citizens can work in coalitions to help require fiscal responsibility from the oil industry." Speaking to 350 persons during Hartford, Conn., observance of Big Business Day, Nader decried the companies' "arrogant stance" in threatening to pass through the tax. "When a company like Exxon says, 'You cannot tax me because I'll pass it on,' and makes this tax into a sales tax on the consumers, they are proving our point that they are acting as authoritarian governments."

Four other state legislatures—in Rhode Island, Maryland, Massachusetts and Kentucky—have been considering oil tax proposals this year. In New York, Governor Hugh Carey recently introduced a package of tax measures that included a \$160 million oil company tax to be used for transportation and energy conservation programs. In June, California residents will vote on a 2.5 percent surcharge on the corporate income tax for oil companies. In addition, C/LEC plans to have oil tax bills introduced in 10 other states.

Dan Marshall, former research coordinator for the Cleveland division of economic development and a former IN THESE TIMES staff reporter, is now staff director of Citizens Action. Tom Corrigan is a campaign coordinator of CCAG.

WINNING STRIKE

Harvester workers stop erosion

By David Moberg

AFTER A SOLID REBUFF TO management efforts to take away much-cherished rights at work, 35,000 International Harvester strikers began returning to work April 20 without making a single significant concession in their contract dispute. They had been on strike 172 days, the longest multi-plant strike in the history of their union, the United Auto Workers, and the longest in the history of Harvester, whose anti-union record goes back to the time of the eight-hour day movement and the famous 1886 Haymarket rally, called to protest attacks by Harvester's Pinkerton agents on striking workers.

"We got everything we really wanted," Leo Potocki, an officer of the West Pullman local in Chicago, said. "We were out so long just to save what we had. We lost \$9,000 to \$10,000 per person, but I feel it was worthwhile."

Although there was no dispute on the basic economic package, which followed the pattern in the agriculture and heavy equipment industry established last fall, Harvester chairman Archie R. McCordell took the advice of outside consultants that the corporation had to eliminate various work rules won over the

years by Harvester workers in order to compete successfully with other equipment manufacturers. Harvester, however, had not been doing badly recently with the work rules: in 1979 the corporation reported a 20 percent return on stockholder's equity.

Harvester demanded that workers submit to forced overtime work (reversing a requirement that all overtime be voluntary, in effect since 1950), limit transfers and attend work the day before and after holidays to qualify for holiday pay. Management wanted to cut back on health benefits and on vacation for new employees. The company also wanted to be able to force piece-workers, a large fraction of its employees, to accept any other assignment once their regular work was finished. Workers under the existing contract had the right to go home rather than accept an unwanted reassignment.

Several weeks ago the company dropped its demand for mandatory overtime, and the union agreed to establish a voluntary pool of workers from all parts of each factory who were willing to take overtime work if there weren't enough members of a particular department willing to work extra hours. But members of the pool can turn down any overtime request.

Most Harvester workers saw manda-

tory overtime as not only a step back in shop floor rights, but also a threat to their family life. Control over overtime can also be a potent weapon in support of local grievance battles.

In the final weeks, the sticky issues were piece-worker rights to refuse reassignment, pension and vacation credits for the period of the strike, amnesty for three strikers accused of picket line violence, and rights of workers to transfer to new operations. The transfer privileges were especially important for workers at the Fort Wayne, Ind., plant, which may soon close as the company opens a new factory in Wagner, Okla. Eventually the union won sufficient credits to protect workers' pensions and vacations, got the three workers back with suspensions rather than discharges and held the line on piece-worker rights.

The vote was strongly in favor of ratification, although settlement at two locals was held up by local issues. Dissenters objected primarily to the company's insistence on staggering the return of the work force after the strike.

Harvester is expected to register a loss of close to half a billion dollars as a result of the strike, which local union officials called a "lockout," since the issues were all company take-away demands. Some workers may soon face

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PENNSYLVANIA PRIMARY

Labor gives Kennedy a small edge

The unions were split between Carter and Kennedy. Many leaders were hesitant to oppose an incumbent, but the trend is away from the President.

By David Moberg

PITTSBURGH

AL LISCNER, A 38-YEAR-OLD steelworker at the Duquesne, Pa., steel works of U.S. Steel, had wanted Kennedy to run for president since 1972. Now his hope was being realized, and he was satisfied with the speech Kennedy had just given to some 300 steelworkers, pensioners and Homestead neighbors.

"Carter is a Republican, a Southern Democrat," Liscner said. "He don't really think of working people." But he added, he didn't agree with Kennedy on gun control, although since two Kennedy brothers were assassinated, "I can understand that."

For other blue-collar workers in the April 22 Pennsylvania primary, the balance tipped the other way—personal antipathy to Kennedy or overriding concern with blocking all gun control outweighing their worries about the economy. Surveys of voters leaving the polls suggested that the strongest motivations on both sides were "anti" sentiments—Kennedy supporters finding Carter an economic disaster, Carter supporters disliking and distrusting Kennedy.

In the end Kennedy squeaked by with a narrow victory in the popular vote, leading Carter 52 to 43 percent among blue-collar voters, according to the ABC survey (but splitting even, according to CBS). Kennedy's important 90,000 vote margin in Philadelphia was built in part on endorsements from Mayor William Green and the locally strong municipal union (AFSCME) as well as solid black and Roman Catholic votes.

On the Republican side, Reagan probably was distinguished as the one candidate whose supporters were most solidly for him rather than just voting against the opponent, but George Bush found enough people against Reagan to give him a solid 53 to 46 percent victory. Pennsylvania's election rules did not permit crossovers, denying Reagan some of the conservative, hawkish blue-collar Democratic support he has drawn elsewhere.

Labor and Kennedy.

Given the strong blue-collar character of Pennsylvania and its strong unions (the state is the fourth most unionized in the country), it is surprising that some of the signs of growing union dissatisfaction with Carter and support for Kennedy did not show up even more markedly in the election results.

At the state AFL-CIO meeting in Pittsburgh the week before the primary, Kennedy received a rousing, enthusiastic response that swamped the warm welcome Vice-President Walter Mondale got the day before—and judging from delegate comments, much of that applause was for Mondale personally, not for his boss. When the state federation presi-



Senator Kennedy with the United Auto Workers' John McCarroll.

dent repeated his formulaic introduction that no endorsement would be permitted, there were boos and chants of "We want Kennedy" and "Endorse him."

Before the Pennsylvania primary Kennedy picked up two big endorsements—889,000-member AFSCME and 528,000-member Service Employees. Carter received the blessing of the United Mine Workers, an important force in the coal-mining parts of the state. Kennedy had already won either leadership or official union support (the difference in money and people in that can be important) from such unions as the Machinists, the UAW (several top officers including president Doug Fraser), the Electrical Workers (IUE), the Teachers (AFT), the Rubberworkers, Railway and Airline Clerks, International Chemical Workers, Woodworkers, Painters, Firefighters, Longshoremen (ILA), Farm Workers, Bricklayers and Paperworkers. Carter has the backing of leaders or institutions among a similarly strong list—National Education Association, Communications Workers, Plumbers, Ironworkers, Operating Engineers, Carpenters, Ladies Garment Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers, Electrical Workers (IBEW) and much of the Clothing and Textile Workers. The AFL-CIO is neutral.

Judging from interviews in Pennsylvania and comments of campaign organizers, there has been a steady swelling of labor support for Kennedy, especially from the local and regional officers and many staff workers. That has helped push some unions, such as AFSCME, toward endorsement, but many top officials have decided to play it cool.

There was considerable support for Kennedy from Steelworkers local leaders and members in Pennsylvania, for example, but the union continued its official neutrality, adopted in large part because of the union's heavy collective bargaining schedule this year—basic steel (now settled), aluminum and non-ferrous metals. But privately the sentiment was strongly for Kennedy—or against Carter. Union officials are angry that Carter dropped the trigger price mechanism that set a floor on imported steel prices and are unhappy with Carter's general economic policy.

After steadfastly repeating his union's

official neutrality, executive board member Paul McHale, district director for northeastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, gave an assessment of the candidates' strengths and weaknesses that all favored Kennedy: "The problems Kennedy is addressing head-on are inflation, oil and energy. Also, we're kind of disturbed the Carter administration has not put on steel boycotts. Getting rid of the trigger price mechanism is a problem...Kennedy is a firm supporter of keeping American industry at home instead of exporting it."

But the Mineworkers saw their self-in-

terest differently. "It was the specifics on coal that was the deciding factor" in the endorsement, Joe Jurczak, staff coordinator of Pennsylvania COMPAC (the miners' political action committee), said. Carter backs a massive synthetic fuel program; Kennedy wants a more modest plan. Even though Carter backs nuclear power and Kennedy wants to stop it, with coal taking up the slack, coal miners "voted their interest," Jurczak said. In a few precincts with heavy coal miner registration, Carter beat Kennedy 60 percent to 40 percent. But the Mineworkers had been slow to endorse Carter, partly because there was rank and file resentment, Jurczak acknowledged, over Carter's invoking the Taft-Hartley act against the miners in their 1978 strike. Eventually, however, there was the feeling among officers that "Carter is simply going to be the Democratic nominee," Jurczak said.

AFSCME, on the other hand, had been neutral in large part because Carter, in studiously wooing the leaders with a White House invitation, had promised to hold the line on public programs important to public employees. The first "bare bones" budget didn't make the union happy, but the new Carter budget, announced in generalities before the Illinois primary, could mean losses of hundreds of thousands of public employee jobs. AFSCME president Jerry Wurf "finally said this is what we get for supporting Carter or staying neutral," one AFSCME official said. "There's nothing to be lost by supporting Kennedy," who has a 100 percent voting record on AFSCME issues.

Carter's incumbency has helped him immensely, and Kennedy's campaign issues and organization originally sapped some potential union backing. "Carter can lay something on the table as a sitting president—'Stick with me and I'll do something, mess with me and I'll jam it in your ear,'" Auto Worker legislative representative Jerry Tucker said. In many instances unions have backed Carter because they desperately want some protective legislation for jobs in their in-

Continued on page 14.

In These Times covers the labor movement from top to bottom, from the big struggles to the small. It can be expected to give the kind of political coverage you can't find elsewhere. I urge you to subscribe to In These Times.

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STWI



Women, like these in Hanoi, now constitute a majority of workers in industry and agriculture, especially in northern provinces.

INDOCHINA

After 30 years of war and five of peace, Vietnam still suffers

By Chris Mullin

HANOI

“WE HAVE DEFEATED the U.S. invaders. Our beautiful country has forever returned to the hands of our people. We are the complete masters of the immense and rich mountains, plains, seas...certainly we will rebuild our Fatherland, making it ten times greater and more beautiful than today.”

So said Le Duan, first secretary of the Vietnamese Communist Party in his address to the newly elected National Assembly in 1976—shortly after the country had been formally reunified.

In those days there were good grounds for optimism. After 30 years of war Vietnam seemed set for an outbreak of peace. The 1976-80 State Plan envisaged rapid progress towards self-sufficiency in food which would lay the foundation for an industrial base.

None of this has come to pass. The plan called for 21 million tons of food grain by 1980. This year Vietnam will be lucky to produce 17 million. The plan called for 17 million pigs. There are at most only 10 million. The plan called for 10 million tons of coal. This year only seven million are expected.

To the man on the Hanoi omnibus the effects are stark. Although the adult food rations have remained unchanged at between 13 and 21 kilos (depending on the type of work you do) a month, the proportion of rice has steadily fallen and been supplemented by wheat and potatoes—a diet not popular with Vietnamese. On the free market the price of rice and meat has escalated dramatically with a kilo of pork costing up to one-third of an average monthly wage.

In the shops the shelves are bare of all but the most basic essentials and the occasional “luxury” such as a table tennis bat can cost up to one-sixth of an average monthly wage. Even essentials are often lacking. At the time of my visit, for example, the Viet Duc hospital in Hanoi had no soap.

There is no simple explanation for Vietnam's continuing ill-fortune. The

answer lies with a combination of what Vietnamese leaders call “objective” and “subjective” factors. The main objective factors are the weather—a devastating series of typhoons, floods and droughts—and the wars with China and Pol Pot's Kampuchea. Subjective obstacles to progress include stifling bureaucracy and, especially in the south, corrupt or overzealous cadres.

The series of poor harvests, due mainly to terrible weather, has meant that Vietnam has had to burn up precious foreign exchange purchasing grain to make good the shortfall. But it is the confrontation with China that has completely reversed Vietnam's economic priorities.

Feed the military.

Whereas the existing State Plan envisaged good harvests, heavy industry and an economy oriented toward trade with both Western Europe and the Soviet Bloc, the next State Plan (1981-5) will be based on quite different assumptions. The possibility of another attack by China now dominates all official thinking. According to the editor of Nhan Dhan, Vietnam's main daily paper, Hoang Tung, the theme of the next plan will be “to militarize the whole country.” This means an emphasis on food production; the shelving of plans for heavy industry; some production of consumer goods to alleviate the austere lives of the people—especially in the North; and even heavier reliance on Soviet aid.

According to Hoang Tung, Vietnam's poor economy now shoulders the highest percentage of military mobilization in the world. One Vietnamese economist estimates that the armed forces consume well over 50 percent of the country's national product. Out of a labor force of about 30 million, well over one million are in the regional or national armed forces.

The army absorbs the best engineers and technicians and many of the best administrators, leaving the work of production to be carried out by a predominantly unskilled and female labor force.

The result, according to Nguyen Xuan Oanh, a former acting prime minister of South Vietnam, is that there has been

Because of the threat of war with China, the army absorbs most of the skilled members of the workforce.

“no investment at all.” Mr. Xuan, who has found a niche in the new order as an economic adviser, says: “The economy lives on the savings of the last 30 years. Our stock of capital is diminishing every day.”

The effect on production is considerable. The Mai Dong engineering works in Hanoi, for example, was reported to have sent 35 percent of its male workers to the army last year and also had to switch from making metal presses to shovels for digging trenches. In the northern countryside the labor is up to 70 percent female in some cooperatives. Foreign experts working on aid projects report considerable delays due to shortage of labor.

They didn't want this.

The leaders of Vietnam never intended that events should work out like this. After 1975 they strove hard to establish economic links with Western countries. Foreign investment was to be permitted on relatively generous terms. There was even an attempt, lasting three years, to re-establish relations with the U.S., in the course of which Vietnam even dropped its demand for war reparations. But all this has come to nothing.

Since the end of the war the U.S. has maintained a strict trade embargo on Vietnam and has vigorously lobbied other Western countries to do likewise. Since mid-1979 Western economic aid has also more or less dried up, with the only exception being aid from Sweden—which is Vietnam's third largest aid don-

or after the Soviet Union and East Germany. Last year the World Bank yielded to American pressure and refused to provide further credits to Vietnam.

The main exception was oil. Since 1975 companies from West Germany, Italy and Japan have been prospecting—so far without success—for oil off the coast of South Vietnam.

Negotiations on a resumption of diplomatic relations with the U.S. continued until September 1978 when according to the foreign minister, Nguyen Co Thach, “We had reached agreement even to the extent of saying they could have back their former consulate in Hanoi from the days of the French, then suddenly everything was postponed. Now I realize that the cause was normalization of relations between the U.S. and China.”

In the circumstances the Vietnamese feel they had little choice but to fall back upon the Soviet Union. They waited until 1977 to join the Soviet bloc trading alliance COMECON. Thach says the delay in joining was because COMECON is a cooperative and up to that time Vietnam did not have enough to contribute by way of exports. Other commentators have suggested they were leaving their options open.

Whatever the explanation, the fact is that Vietnam now relies heavily on the Soviet Union. Thach declines to give an exact figure for Soviet aid but said, “You can say it is much more than during the American war.” The Soviet Union itself has given figures. According to the magazine *Soviet News*, aid to Vietnam for the year up to July 1979 amounted to 2.5 million tons of grain; 17 million meters of fabric and 572,000 tons of fertilizer and medicine. The Soviet Union was also said to be helping with 285 projects “of national significance,” besides supplying all the armaments necessary for defense against China and for the war in Kampuchea.

Whether this amounts to dependence upon the Soviet Union is a moot point. Thach insists that, unlike China, the Soviet Union has never put pressure on Vietnam as a condition for aid. One can only note that Vietnam supported the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and this year was quick to support “the noble and generous action” of the Soviet Union in promoting the “glorious victory” of the Afghan revolution. Some would argue that this is an unfortunate stance for a country that has fought so hard for its own independence.

In the long run, if it is ever to have the breathing space to develop, Vietnam will have to make peace with China. Peace with China depends in turn on a settlement in Kampuchea and this means compromise—a word that does not trot lightly off the lips of leaders who have led Vietnam to a long succession of military victories.

One answer might be to try and broaden the base of the present Kampuchean government by inviting the return of Sihanouk or ex-prime minister Son Sann, who is at present in a camp in Thailand. Failing that, some form of United Nations presence to guarantee against the return of Pol Pot might be worth exploring.

Although they do not absolutely rule out such possibilities, both Hoang Tung and foreign minister Thach are skeptical. Tung simply points to Sihanouk's recent visit to the U.S. where he called on the U.S. to organize an international conference to get the Vietnamese out of Kampuchea.

Thach cites the view of Kampuchea's Heng Samrin government: “They have said there is no room for political settlement. It's their problem, not mine.”

But of course Kampuchea is Vietnam's problem, too. Without a settlement in Kampuchea there can be no peace with China. Without peace with China there is little hope of serious economic development. China is not like Vietnam's other enemies. Although it can be defeated in battle, it will not go away.

Chris Mullin, our British correspondent, has just returned from a three-month tour of Indochina and India. This is the first of three articles on North and South Vietnam and Kampuchea.

LIBYA/OIL

Qathafi decrees direct self-rule

By Chester Hartman

TRIPOLI

LIBYA IS ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING places that still elicit eyebrow-raising when you mention you've just spent time there. The occasion was the Fifth World Oilworkers' Antimonopolist Conference, held March 26-30 in Tripoli (best known to most Americans as the counterpart to the "halls of Montezuma"). Some 400 delegates from 56 countries (covering every continent) were there, for the most part representing oilworkers' unions and trade union federations, but with a large number of national liberation representatives (17 in all, each of whom received a tremendous standing ovation from the conferees), and a contingent of about 40 North Americans, representing a random assortment of left groups here. (Notably absent was the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union, which had been invited but didn't show. In a phone interview from Denver after I returned, OCAW International president Robert Goss explained his absence in terms of the union's national strike.)

The conference, held in the People's Hall and simultaneously translated into French, Arabic, English and Spanish, consisted almost exclusively of speeches (many of immoderate length) by delegates. Most analyzed the role of multinational corporations in the current "energy crisis": how the new power of oil-producing Third World countries was being used as the scapegoat for the rampant inflation in the U.S. and other Western countries; the racism latent in attributing the crisis to "the Arabs"; the real dangers of war inherent in the current crisis; the shameful profits being made by the multinationals despite and under cover of the "crisis." Speaker after speaker stressed the need to limit the rate at which oil is being extracted, in order to ration supplies for future generations. The changes that production limits and dramatic price increases are necessitating in industrialized countries were hailed universally as in the world's best interests.

Speech-making aside, the conference generated tremendous excitement around the possibilities of creating a new world economic system based on the shifting economic and political re-

Colonel Muḥammad Al Qathafi
is an anti-Marxist socialist.



lationships engendered by the power of the Third World oil-producing countries. Attention, specifically, focused on the role that oil workers and others can play, in Third World and industrialized countries, oil-exporters and oil-importers, in bringing about that transformation, if they act with class-consciousness and international solidarity.

Libya's hosting of the conference was fitting, given the avant-garde role it has played in the oil revolution. A huge sign in the conference hall behind the speakers' rostrum stated: "The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya led the fight in the world of petroleum and urged peoples to claim their rights and wealth and r... leads the fighting until now." One felt it really had meaning for those at the conference. (Before the 1969 revolution Libyan oil was priced at \$2.23 a barrel, and daily production was 4.6 million barrels; current figures are \$35-40 and 1.7 million barrels, respectively.)

The functional work of the conference was done by a symposium of trade union experts, economists and technicians, who prepared an exhaustive set of 40 specific recommendations, adopted by the full conference at its final session, aimed at oil workers in different kinds of countries (industrialized-oil producers, industrialized-oil importers, Third World oil producers, Third World oil importers.) These had to do with struggles for:

- Nationalization of oil refining and marketing operations.
- Determination of production levels by producer governments rather than by multinational corporations.
- Linking oil exports to development of alternative energy resources and oil-saving measures in importing countries,

Continued on page 12.

Unions want to produce less oil

By Chester Hartman

THE FIVE-DAY CONFERENCE IN Libya and the three days I remained afterwards for tours and conversations with housing officials offered a glimpse at some fascinating economic and political experiments.

The country's official name is now the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (a word meaning "state of the masses"). Libya has only three million people, and its extraordinary recent wealth is reflected in an estimated \$8500 per capita GNP (based on oil revenues alone). Medical care and schooling (including foreign university training) are free, as is housing for those with monthly incomes under 100 dinars (about \$340); housing subsidies are made available to those with higher incomes to insure that they are left with at least 100 dinars for non-housing expenditures. (Libya's housing programs are highly progressive, including the abolition of all rental housing and the Koranic prohibition of interest on loans, including mortgages.) One sees new construction everywhere, undertaken for the most part by German, Rumanian, Yugoslav and other foreign contractors, and the rate of automobile ownership is astounding—and disturbing: Tripoli's traffic congestion and air quality, especially for a city on the shores of the Mediterranean, are awful. A government driver ferrying me from the hotel to the conference hall said his extended family owned four new cars.

Much in Libya is dictated by the Green Book, a three-part set of pronouncements by Colonel Muḥammad Al Qathafi: The Solution of the Problem of Democracy; The Solution of the Economic Problem: 'Socialism'; The Social Basis. (Copies of the short—20,000 words in all—set of books are available free from the Libyan UN Mission.)

Following the precepts of the Green Book, Libya has been rapidly moving to abolish wage labor, in favor of owner-

ship by worker cooperatives. Outside the oil sector (regarded as a national treasure) all enterprises formerly employing workers have reportedly been transformed into cooperatively run businesses, run by elected workers' committee.

Qathafi's solution to the problem of democracy is direct democracy through "people's committees." His Green Book criticizes the actual workings of representative democracy, parliaments and political parties as fraudulent and anti-democratic. But it is not clear whether his alternative of popular congresses, people's committees (based both on geography and work functions, and run by secretariats), with periodic General People's Congresses, can work, either in theory or in fact (we attended no meetings of these bodies). A huge wall poster at the conference hall stated: "In Libya, there is no political system, no rulers, no government, no party system, no multi-parties and no central committee. In Libya exist the people who own authority, the wealth and the weapon."

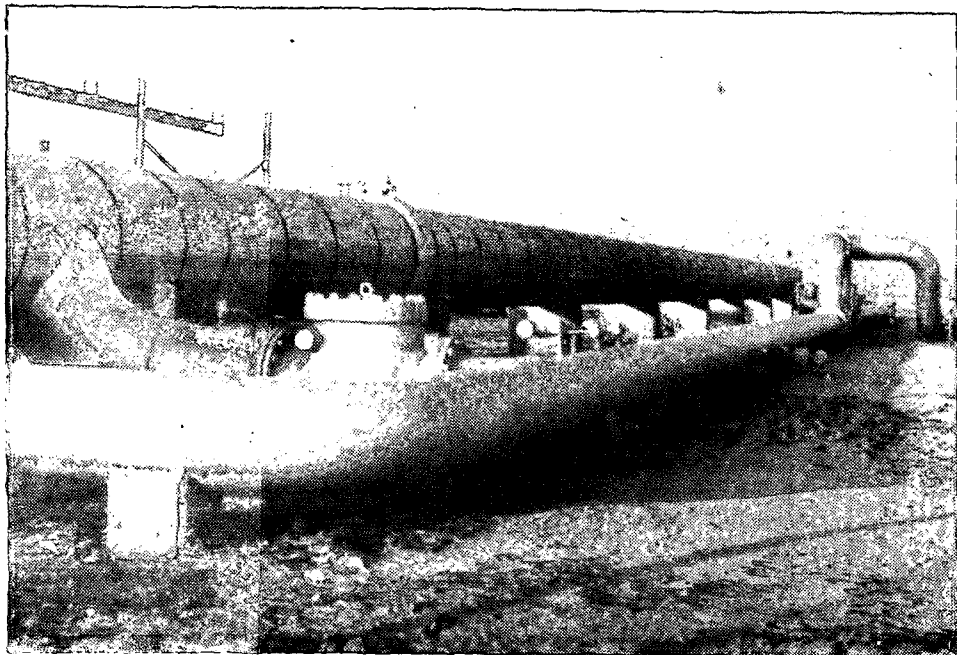
Certainly the extreme democratic theory and rhetoric seem at odds with the ubiquitous movie-star like photos of Col. Qathafi and the inevitable cheering by Libyans at every mention of his name by a speaker. That a deeply based democratic governing style could evolve within a mere decade from a country whose modern history has successively been as colony, Western military base, and puppet monarchy, seems doubtful. Nonetheless, the enthusiasm and pride of the many Libyan officials we met, their apparent commitment to this idea, and the major advances the country has experienced since 1969 suggest a strong belief in the validity of this theory and a will to work toward it. More pragmatically, Qathafi—as strongly anti-Marxist and anti-Stalinist as he is socialist—may be seeking a way to avoid the pitfalls of bureaucracy and party-ism, by directly building popular institutions.

The question of women's role and rights is far less ambiguous. Sadly, the Green Book reads like a parody of 19th century Victoriana. Because "woman menstruates or suffers from feebleness every month," or is pregnant when not menstruating, or breast-feeding following pregnancy, she is weak and unsuited to man's work and roles. Childcare facilities and "education that leads to work unsuitable for her nature" are firmly rejected. "A woman is tender. A woman is pretty. A woman weeps easily. A woman is easily frightened. In general woman is gentle and man is tough by virtue of their inbred nature." One possible explanation for this unremitting emphasis on home and children is the desire to maintain and increase the country's already high population growth rate, in order to improve military security against hostile neighbors and reduce reliance on foreign workers. But with increasing lower and university education for all Libyans, women included, it is unclear how long such a strict constructionist view of the Koranic teachings can be maintained; there is evidence that more socially progressive forces within Libya are eager to move toward sexual equality—the conference invitation to progressive and explicitly feminist U.S. groups is one clear manifestation of that strain.

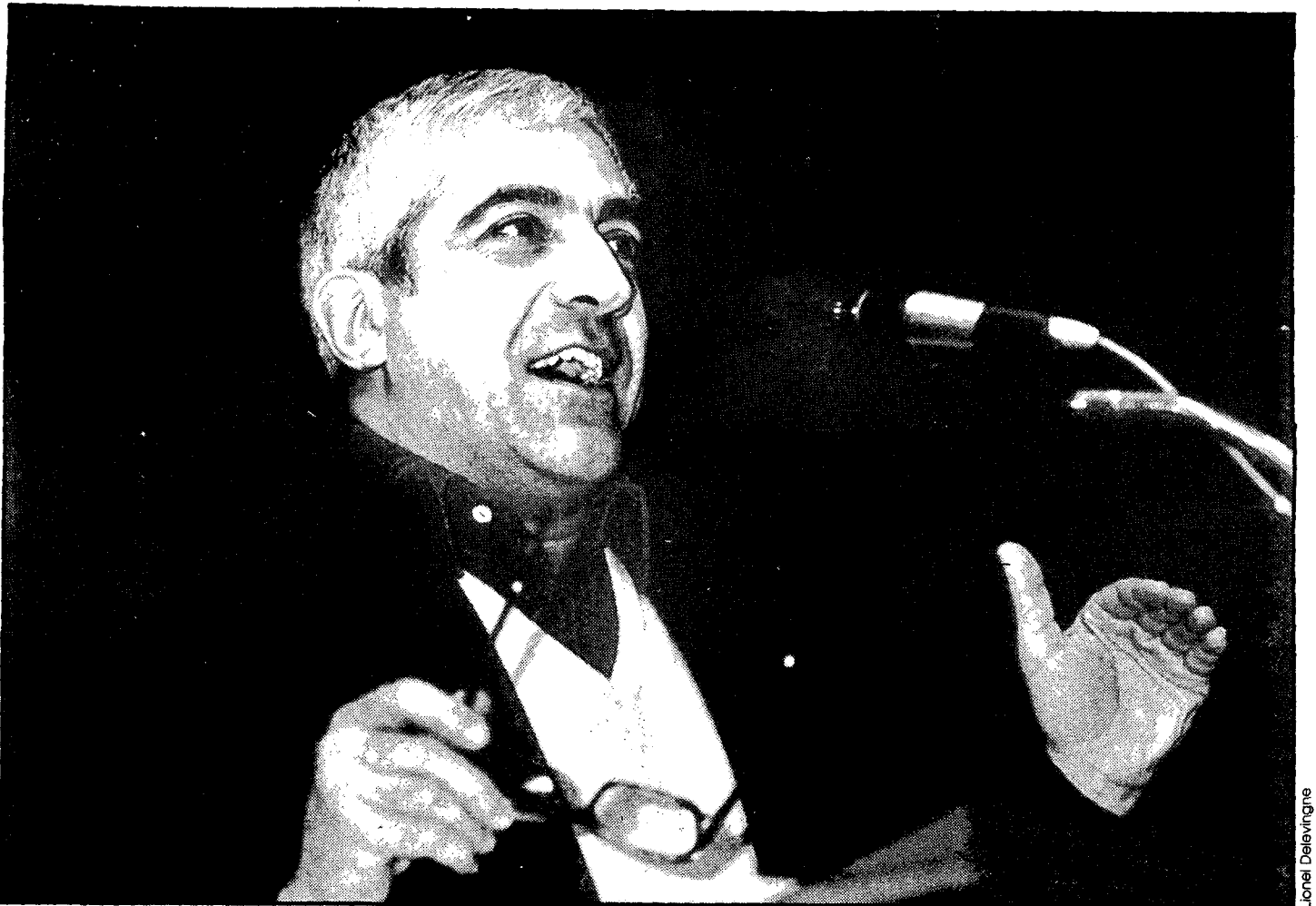
Also disturbing is the degree to which Libyans have embraced some simplistic and wrongheaded notions about Israel. Zionism is seen as the source of all problems in the Middle East, and U.S. foreign policy is viewed as dictated by American Zionists. While perhaps explicable by the extreme hostility Israel's expansionism has generated and the deep sympathy felt for displaced Palestinians, such defective analysis undercuts Libya's anti-imperialist policies and its attempts to reach out to progressive Westerners.

The 40 Americans who just returned from the Oil Workers' World Antimonopolist Conference pretty much shared the view that Libya's social revolution should be taken seriously. It has made remarkable economic and political progress over the last 11 years and ought to be studied carefully.

For background on the pre-revolutionary period and the first five years following Qathafi's 1969 takeover, I recommend Ruth First's *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, Africana Publ., 1975



Libya's oil wealth provides an \$8500 per capita GNP.



Major Otelo
Saraivo de Carvalho

PORTUGAL

Otelo de Carvalho is fighting to save democracy

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

OTELO IS NOT EASILY DISCOURAGED. Emerging from nearly four years of virtual house arrest, the hero of the 1974 "red carnation revolution" is getting ready to go into electoral battle against the resurgent right to win a place for a "nonaligned left" in Portugal's political life.

"These next elections are crucial," he says. "To undo the democratic gains of April 25, the right must win next October's parliamentary elections and then manage to get its candidate elected President." He hopes the left can stop the rightward trend.

Major Otelo Saraivo de Carvalho is sure of his place in history. The Armed Forces Movement (MFA), which he helped create among junior officers fed up with Portugal's colonial wars, gave him the job of organizing the April 25, 1974, coup that ended half a century of fascist dictatorship. In the months that followed, as the revolution veered to the left, Otelo was in the forefront, commanding the MFA's special political watchdog force COPCON (continental operational command) that urged landless Alentejo peasants to go ahead and take over big estates abandoned by their owners.

When, in late 1974, the revolution veered back to the right, Otelo ended up in prison for a couple of months. He came out in 1976 to win 17 percent of the vote in the presidential election against all the political parties. Poor people appreciated his straightforward simplicity. Muzzled and harassed for years by military tribunals, he has recently been granted the status of reserve Major and the right to speak. Undaunted, Otelo is bouncing back for what he considers the revolutionary left's last chance to count in Portuguese politics.

During a recent visit to Paris, Otelo said he thought a group of representatives of the "nonaligned" left in the Portuguese parliament might help promote some unity between the Communist and Socialist parties, which "spend all their time fighting with each other. We want

to keep up a dialogue with the Communists and Socialists to try to strengthen the left, because for us, the enemy is the right and the possibility of a return to fascism."

The presidential election due to follow the parliamentary elections will be a "terrible battle," Otelo predicts. The right is currently doing all it can to discredit President Antonio Ramalho Eanes to get him out of the running and enhance the prospects of the right's candidate, perhaps Prime Minister Francisco Sa Carneiro. "Eanes wanted to arbitrate between the left and the right," Otelo explains. "He hasn't gone as far as the right wanted, he defends the right to strike guaranteed by the constitution and in general stands as defender of the constitution. But the workers recall that in a showdown Eanes repeatedly favors the right." In the polarization between left and right, Eanes suffers from the same ambiguity that undid the Socialists in the last elections.

Otelo himself is "available" to run for president. Today, he notes, he is Eanes' top challenger in all public opinion polls, and his percentage is going up while Eanes' is going down.

Ego trip? Otelo has no trace of the pretentiousness and histrionics one might expect of a Latin "liberator of the people." During his recent visit to Paris, I followed him around a bit and heard what he had to say at a Sorbonne lecture, over a Chinese meal in the Latin Quarter and at a meeting at the Mutualite hall where he fielded occasionally aggressive questions from a crowd of Portuguese immigrant workers. With characteristic optimism, he made more appointments than he could keep but actually did get to see quite an array of French Socialist Party and labor leaders. He was invited to Paris as the first gesture of the newly-formed "Gramsci Institute" set up by a group of young scholars who consider themselves "Eurocommunist" and want to get away from the partisan feuds of the French left.

The captains' movement.

Speaking clear French enriched by words of his own coinage (his verb *leaderer*, meaning "to exercise leadership of," actually got picked up and used by

French listeners), Otelo stressed the political naivete of the junior officers who set off the Portuguese revolution. Initially, the "captains movement" was a group of disgruntled junior officers demanding benefits for themselves, but after they got their way in 1973, they suddenly realized their strength, due to their key role in the colonial wars, and decided to bring down the government.

Politically ignorant, isolated from the rest of the population, the vast majority of the MFA officers intended only to bring in democratic institutions. But after the April 25, 1974, coup changed the situation, "we watched with stupefaction the growth of a huge mass movement." This appalled a minority of right-wing officers, who on March 11, 1975, grouped around General Spínola to attempt another "change in the situation" to the right. Their failure gave an impetus to social revolutionary tendencies, which were foremost during the "hot summer" of 1975. The revolutionary disorder was too much for most of the MFA officers. On Nov. 25, 1975—the third milestone of the "red carnation revolution"—Otelo backed away from a long-brewing test of strength between left and moderate officers, allowing the moderates to seize control and begin a long swing to the right that seems not yet to have ended.

The MFA officers knew about the liberation movements they had been sent to combat in the African colonies, but they were completely ignorant of Portuguese politics. "The first time I ever heard of Alvaro Cunhal" (the Communist Party leader), Otelo recalls, "was after April 25 when someone said, 'Cunhal is coming back from Czechoslovakia,' and I said, 'Who's he?'"

After March 11, some officers began to think of leading Portugal on a socialist course, "without knowing quite what that would mean." Instead, "we held elections and thus gave power to the political parties. That changed everything. The fights between the political parties penetrated the MFA and divided a movement that till then had been united." By the end of the "hot summer," most officers were sick of the revolution and wanted to get back to order, discipline and authority.

During the "hot summer," Otelo, in

command of COPCON, was seen by some as the "strongman" of a revolution that never got itself together. Otelo seemed to be the hope of a "romantic revolutionary" left around Doctor Isabel do Carmo of the Revolutionary Proletarian Party, a Guevarist grouplet. It is obvious that he got that far into the revolutionary process not by being a hothead but quite the opposite: by being a very healthy, open-minded, good-natured person able to take revolutionary confusion in stride. Instead of freaking out, like some of his more up-tight colleagues, he was frankly delighted at the unexpected signs of new life from his long-downtrodden people. He modestly accepted the explanations for all this hastily provided by the revolutionary left.

Otelo is a sort of Candide. He seems too transparent for politics and perhaps too sentimental—he might rather settle for being liked, which comes easy to him, than exercise power. He is a genuine populist, a sincere democrat who could stride unflinching right up to the brink of civil war and then suddenly balk. He sometimes wonders if what he's doing makes sense. If the people want a revolution, fine, he'll give them a hand. If they don't there's nothing he can do about it.

Avoiding the fight.

At the Mutualite meeting, a Portuguese worker asked him the recurring angry question: Why, when he had power, didn't he go ahead and install a revolutionary dictatorship? Otelo called that "a dangerous question." He shook his head. "Suppose I had been a right-winger? Before you go asking for dictatorship, watch out...." The crowd applauded.

At the Sorbonne, he was also reproved for missing his historic chance by refusing, on Nov. 25, 1975, "a civil war you might have won." Otelo doesn't think so. The country was "absolutely split in two" in November 1975, with the left in control of Lisbon and Alentejo, in the south, "but most of the population and biggest troop concentrations north of the Tagus." The right would have held the north and received massive aid from abroad. Besides, "we didn't want a confrontation because we saw that the other

side was not yet fascist, but included men with moderate political views. So we preferred to lose that battle—by being cautious, admittedly—and fight only with political arms.”

Otelo insists that the power he held as COPCON commander was only delegated him by his comrades in the MFA, “and I couldn’t betray their trust by using it against them.”

Whereas he himself may have missed a chance to seize power, Otelo has never believed that the Portuguese Communist Party was in any position to take over. Such fears were a false alarm, used to justify the Socialist Party’s extreme anti-communism which has only served to put the right back in office. “In fact, the PCP was unable to keep up with the mass movement, which was way out of its control. It feels much better today, with a bigger electorate enabling it to bargain calmly with a bourgeois government.”

Otelo considers himself the PCP’s main ideological adversary today, and this is probable, since he lured away most of the PCP electorate from the PCP presidential candidate in the 1976 elections. Since he again hopes to attract Communist voters, Otelo is cautious in public meetings about “critical analysis of the PCP that might be misconstrued.” At the Sorbonne, he noted that the PCP is the biggest organized political force in Portugal, “and we always make the distinction between the party leadership and the working people at the base.” The PCP has an “absolutely Stalinist approach, with a fierce centralism, not ‘democratic centralism’ because there is nothing democratic about it.” Both the Communist and Socialist parties “are strong forces that enjoy immense financial support.”

“When a party receives a big financial subsidy from another party or government, it becomes subordinate. West Germany is rich and has had a strong influence on the Socialist Party via the Socialist International,” he maintains. The nonaligned left is the unsubsidized left.

“The Socialist Party had an historic opportunity, even after the revolutionary process was ended Nov. 25, to maintain a left course. But it turned to social democratic right-wing practices.



Otelo predicts a “terrible battle” in the October presidential elections, with a right candidate (perhaps prime minister Francisco Sa Carneiro, left) attempting to replace the too-soft Antonio Remalho Eanes, right.



“The Socialist Party is very electoralist, but incapable of organizing the masses. Between two elections, the Socialist Party does absolutely nothing. But during an election campaign, it adopts left language, Mario Soares goes and eats sardines on the sidewalk with the people, takes the bus and so on. But now we know perfectly well what that party stands for.” It is a liberal, social democratic party. Still, it is part of the left, and Otelo wants the left, with all its faults, to get together to stop the right from taking Portugal back to where it was before April 25.

Threat from the right.

Otelo rules out any rightist military coup. Despite the purge of revolutionary officers after Nov. 25 and the subsequent normalization, the Portuguese Armed Forces remain profoundly marked by April 25. There are 6,000 commissioned officers in the Portuguese armed forces. Last year, 1,200 of them attended the lunch commemorating April 25. That means 20 percent of the officer corps can be considered progressive. Otelo estimates rightists at about 10 percent. “As for revolutionary officers, there may be 20.”

Otelo adds that the recent triumphalism of the right has actually irritated many younger officers.

However, today the influence of NATO is greater than ever before. Washington and Bonn are no longer embarrassed about their close links to Lisbon, now that it is not a fascist colonial dictatorship. Since Nov. 25, Portuguese officers have resumed the regular training sessions in the U.S. that were interrupted after April 25. One or two CIA agents are routinely recruited from each batch. U.S. Military Advisory Assistant Groups are all over Portugal.

The new rightist foreign minister Diogo Freitas do Amaral has announced that Portugal “must get rid of every trace of Third Worldism and nonalignment, as well as of all hesitations regarding our commitment to the Atlantic Alliance.” Prime Minister Sa Carneiro has blocked two significant nominations approved by President Eanes: that of former prime minister Maria Lurdes de Pintasilgo to UNESCO and that of MFA moderate Colonel Antonio Melo Antunes as deputy United Nations secretary general. Both are moderates whose sympathies would have enabled them to make friends for Portugal in the Third

World. The right seems determined to assure Portugal’s dependence on the capitalist powers by depriving it of any independent foreign policy.

In contrast, Otelo champions non-alignment. “We should make the most of the political advantages we got out of decolonization and build relations with Portugal’s ex-colonies so we can act together internationally to advance a non-aligned strategy on behalf of national independence.” He stresses that Portugal is suited to be a “bridge” between the developed and underdeveloped countries. “Portugal cannot compete with northern Europe, it can never be anything but a poor relation in a Europe dominated by multinational corporations. Our opportunity would be to create a new economic space with Africa, especially with the former colonies.”

Otelo recently visited his native Mozambique to see what exchanges might be possible. He thought Portuguese experts could help Mozambicans improve the quality of their main consumer goods. The Lisbon press made fun of Otelo “the soap salesman.” He answers that Portugal has the sort of technology Mozambique could use for its budding industry, while Mozambique has raw materials Portugal could use, so why not work out trade?

“We need maximum diversification of economic and political relations to assure our independence. Emphasis on Third World countries could counterbalance our heavy dependence on the industrialized capitalist countries, which is currently getting worse and worse.” Instead of North Atlantic subservience, Otelo advocates a “Mediterranean strategy” of collaboration between Latin, Balkan and Arab states to make the Mediterranean a center of peaceful exchange, free of superpower interference. This would require overhauling the foreign ministry, to get it to “express Portuguese character and defend Portuguese interests.”

Imprisoned after Nov. 25, 1975, for having “helped create a climate of revolutionary surrealism” in Portugal, Otelo doesn’t talk about revolution, but only about trying to unify the left, to get Portugal on its own independent course in the world. As ever, but perhaps more than ever, his political inspiration seems to come from the African liberation movements. “Our chances may look slim, but just think of FRELIMO and PAIGC, the Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau liberation movements, a few blacks, an agronomist and a foreman, they started out with nothing to defeat the organized forces of colonialism, with Army, Navy and Air Force. What chance did they have against all that? None at all! But they persevered, organized, found support abroad...in 14 years, they won. The thing is to be stubborn.”

As a leader of the group of junior officers whose coup ended 50 years of fascism in Portugal, Otelo is again entering the fray. This time he hopes to prevent a fascist electoral victory.



LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

PORNOGRAPHY: KATE ELLIS RESPONDS

I WAS PLEASED TO SEE SO MUCH thoughtful commentary in response to my piece on pornography. Basically, I agree with the three writers (*ITT*, Apr. 9) on the fact that there is a relationship between violence and images of violence: one depicts the other. Where we disagree, in varying degrees, is in what this "depicting" means. Certainly it entails more than merely holding a neutral mirror up to the world. To depict means to place before people's eyes, to say, "You should notice this." But does this process, by its very nature, valorize what it depicts? My sense is that WAVAM, WAP, and my three critics would answer yes.

Yet this goes against my own experience as a writer, as well as raising first amendment issues about what should and should not be valorized. I say "notice this" about many things I deplore, sometimes commenting on them and sometimes leaving that task to my readers. A distinction might be made be-

tween influencing people and doing so for profit: I am not selling anything and a lot of pornography is. And even when it isn't selling a product, it is itself a product intruding upon our eyes and ears whether we buy or not. Ultimately, I believe it is selling sexism.

But to say that pornography creates sexism, makes sexism acceptable and even respectable, seems to me to be seriously open to question. Pornography receives its charge from the fact that it depicts the unacceptable. If bondage became as American as apple pie it would disappear from 42nd Street. I therefore cannot accept the distinction made by Katherine Brooks between pornography and erotica. In life I am all for "non-violent, non-sexist, non-commercialized" activities by which people can "enhance their own shared sexual pleasure." But the function of erotic fantasy for me is not the creation of a world I would like to live in but an exploration and *controlled* acting out (in my head or in the world) of my own special nooks in the terrain of the culturally forbidden.

I emphasize control because therein lies the safety, and thus much of the attraction, of fantasizing dangerous and

degrading situations. I think this is why women's reported fantasies are so often labelled masochistic. It is a way of encountering ones worst fears in order to transcend them. The same holds true for bondage, which Robin Goldner and other feminists seem to regard as simply rape with props.

Again I insist that ritual dominance and submission have a complex relationship to the real thing, just as ritual eatings of bread and wine have a complex relationship to human sacrifice.

-Kate Ellis
New York

THE NARROW BASE

AS A READER INTERESTED IN THE viability of the Citizens Party, I would like to take issue with certain aspects of John Judis' analysis (*ITT*, Apr. 2). His conception of how a party is "built" seems flawed, and this conception, I believe, leads him to a false conclusion: that unless the Citizens Party gives up its "dogmatic aversion to Democrats" in order to "transform its original narrow base," it will be doomed to "continued marginality and irrelevance."

The flaw centers on what I call "electrophobia" (election at all cost). First of all, his belief that the Citizens Party could actually get a presidential candidate elected in 1980 seems slightly naive (although I must admit to having voted for McCarthy in '76). More importantly, the pragmatism implicit in this viewpoint is dangerously close to that which has lost both Kennedy and Brown so much credibility on the left.

The ultimate effect of this flaw is the short-sightedness that leads Judis to conclude that the Citizens Party must

"risk losing the central thrust of the party" in an appeal to members of the Democratic Party. Consistency, in maintaining a "central thrust" (i.e., "economic democracy"), and in being active at all levels of political struggle, is the only way for a progressive third party to attract an increasingly non-voting public, gain credibility, and be ultimately successful.

-Robert Drago
Northampton, Mass.

WHO RUNS WHOM

I AGREE WITH ROBERTA LYNCH'S ANALYSIS (*ITT*, Apr. 9) about the imperial base of American foreign policy. But in her conclusion, that the military is "the enemy within" and that it is the military that places "corporate interests" above "national interests," she places the cart before the horse. Corporate and military interests are so intertwined that it is difficult to separate them. But the civilians still rule. They determine where the military fights (or the CIA intervenes), with what weapons, when and for what. This was true in Vietnam and it'll be true, I suspect, when it becomes "necessary" to stop the erosion of corporate interests in Central America.

Too often the left, by framing its analysis solely in anti-militarist terms, neglects to explain the imperial roots of our foreign policy. Capitalism needs a flexible military arm not only to keep the Pentagon busy and the defense industries happy, but to protect the foreign investments so necessary to corporate prosperity.

-Marty Jezer
Bartlettboro, Vt.

BOOKS

The balance of world power has changed

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE 'SOVIET THREAT': Domestic Sources of the Cold War Consensus

By Alan Wolfe

Institute for Policy Studies (1901 Q St., NW, Washington, DC 20009), \$3.95

By William Burr

Alan Wolfe has taken up the difficult task of trying to develop a model to explain the sources of U.S. hostility towards the USSR during the post-World War II era. This is an ambitious task and a difficult one because except for the 1945-1950 period most of the relevant historical materials (National Security Council and Joint Chiefs of Staff files, presidential papers, State Department decimal files, etc.) are not open to researchers. Consequently, he is unable to draw upon reliable sources or secondary historical works for most of the period covered and is forced to rely on traditional methods of political evidence—speculation and sorcery. Many of Wolfe's judgements must therefore be regarded as tentative, at best.

Wolfe cites five different factors to explain cyclical upswings and downswings of American anti-Soviet hostility. His argument is that "five common features run through each period in which anti-Soviet perceptions manifestly increased: a disequilibrium in party politics; the existence of serious threats to the hegemony of the executive branch; an outbreak of a serious case of inter-service rivalry; the development of a strong conflict within the foreign policy establishment over the proper focal points of American policy and the coming to power of political coalitions organized around a need to spur economic growth." Wolfe suggests that the propagation of strong anti-USSR images during the peak periods of 1948-1952, 1957-1963 and the post-1976 period was the means by which politicians have sought to resolve domestic political and

economic problems.

The emphasis on the structure of American political and economic life is useful in interpreting American involvement in world politics. American historians since Turner and Beard have argued that a focus on foreign policy has served governments in their efforts to maintain internal stability and meet the needs of various social classes, interest groups, etc. But Wolfe has an irritating propensity to seek neat little patterns as a way to organize his material, and to overlook evidence that does not fit. It is questionable whether the five factors cited by Wolfe have ever converged during the peaks of Cold War fervor in the way, or with the force, that he suggests.

Using Wolfe's own sources, one can develop alternative explanations of Cold War history that do not force the evidence and that do account for overlooked evidence. In the chapter on inter-service rivalries, Wolfe argues that competition between the armed services for shares of the military budget led the Air Force to exaggerate Soviet goals and capacities to achieve its particular end. The author suggests that Air Force success in capturing a rising share of the budget was the result of its lobbying efforts and the influence of Western Republicans from states with defense contracts.

Wolfe does not explain why key establishment figures like James Forrestal, Thomas Finletter and W. Averell Harriman were strong supporters of air power. His interpretation obscures the broad consensus among strategically placed corporate leaders that American Cold War strategy required a modern, expanded Air Force. Here, as elsewhere in the book, emphasis on the role of special interest groups leads Wolfe to pass over many of the possibilities afforded by a class analysis.

It would be possible to cite other examples where Wolfe ignores contradictory evidence (or misuses evidence), but it is more important to note that Wolfe fails to account for the degree to which

American leaders have had genuine apprehension about the political-military goals of the Soviet Union. He does concede that in the 1940s American policymakers were "genuinely concerned about the threat posed by the Soviet Union to our European allies." But he does not take his own insight seriously by showing its deep impact on policy. It is not enough to look at the domestic scene when trying to understand the foreign policy of a political economy that requires international expansion involving real confrontations with other powers.

Given that over the long term American rulers have sought to stabilize capitalism globally through an "open door" system, it becomes apparent that post-war Russian behavior in Eastern Europe posed a real challenge to American international policy. In the American government view, a Soviet sphere of influence in Europe, supported by Russian divisions, interfered with orderly processes of trade and investment and added immeasurably to West European political insecurity. American leaders regarded these elements of instability as jeopardizing European and global reconstruction on a liberal capitalist basis. From their standpoint, Russian policy, defensive orientation, constituted an aggression against the American definition of peace and prosperity—both non-negotiable demands.

Thus Wolfe's argument that building up Western Europe via the Marshall Plan was "basically tangential to a direct concern with the Soviet Union" is misleading. All the evidence suggests that American policymakers like Paul Hoffman, Dean Acheson, Foster Dulles saw both the creation of the North Atlantic system based on liberal international economic programs and the prosecution of a Cold War against an illiberal power as key elements to a unified strategy for an orderly world capitalism. They could not conceive of a stable European economic system without security provided by NATO and the A-bomb;

nor could they envision an alternative to the Marshall Plan that would not allow Russian strategic and political preponderance in Europe (which they truly feared).

When he moves into the present—when all analysis involves resorting to political science method—Wolfe overstates his case again by suggesting that the reasons for the renewed anti-Soviet drive have "little to do with national security and much to do with politics." A one-sided emphasis on the evil designs of conservative politicians seeking rationalizations for regressive social policies leads Wolfe to overlook a basic issue: as the U.S. becomes what Robert W. Tucker calls a "mature power," it no longer holds the global balance of power in commercial, political and military terms. One indicator of this state of affairs is that Russian industrial output has probably exceeded American industrial output. On this basis, the Russians have achieved at least a rough parity with the U.S. in conventional and strategic arms. The result is a relative decline in American power.

The past decade may turn out to have been a watershed in world politics because of the change in the U.S.-Soviet balance and other global political and economic transformations. This will have great significance for American political life for many years to come as American rulers debate and define their stance (adjustment, resistance, etc.) to new international realities, and as leaders of trade unions and other social movements define their attitudes. At any rate, the 1970s ought not to be interpreted solely in the light of models that attempt to explain U.S.-Soviet relations in a different historical context. It would not be helpful if Wolfe's analysis achieved much currency on the left, because it will add to confusion over issues that require greater clarity of thought.

William Burr is a graduate student U.S. history at Northern Illinois University.

IN DEPTH -

Community organizing and political engagement

By Bob Ross

ON MARCH 29, MASSACHUSETTS FAIR SHARE MARKED ITS fifth year of growth at its annual convention. More than 725 delegates filled Boston's Don Bosco High school with vigorous debate and populist militance suffused with an atmosphere of racial and ethnic unity. Among the most successful of the neighborhood-based citizen action organizations, Fair Share's growth has been rapid. From an organization of 400 families in Chelsea, Mass., in 1975, Fair Share is now comprised of chapters in 37 neighborhoods in 11 Massachusetts cities. It counts some 40,000 members, about 9,000 of whom are related to functioning chapters. Its active leaders number in the hundreds. No longer small or insecure, Fair Share has about 60 full-time organizers, researchers and central staffers. Another 20-80 staff persons work full-time through the year and in the summer, canvassing neighborhoods, raising money and increasing the group's visibility. Fair Share raised and spent over \$1 million in 1979, more than half of that was internally generated from dues, fund-raising events and canvassing. Various public and private grants and programs provide the remainder of its support.

Founded by veterans of the welfare rights movement, new left community organizing, and Alinsky-type community action initiatives, Fair Share is an organization of working people of Massachusetts' central cities. Chapters in such places as Boston, Lowell, Lynn, Worcester, Fall River and Springfield include all of the races and ethnic groups of this diverse but declining industrial state. Five years ago Fair Share's first battle was over tolls on the Mystic River Bridge which connects Boston to its North Shore communities. At the March 29 convention, Fair Share members voted to focus their attention on state-wide campaigns for utility rate reform, the elimination of fuel adjustment clauses (which allow utilities to pass on fuel price raises with no incentive to conserve), and on a campaign against arson-for-profit—a serious problem in older neighborhoods throughout the Commonwealth. The convention also passed resolutions on several other issues, including crime control and against nuclear power.

Fair Share's focus on the bread-and-butter interests of its members has sometimes been criticized by those who thought the group was too silent on issues of racism, and by those who thought the organization reluctant to organize black and other minority residents. In a deeply touching moment, the Convention unanimously voted to condemn "racism in all of its political, social and economic aspects." The delegates undertook to take a stand "when minorities are compromised, discriminated against or abused." Speaker after speaker rose to affirm the need for black and white unity against corporate power. And when Cheryl Harris, a black woman from Boston's Roxbury, rose to speak against racism and to praise Fair Share for its spirit of unity, she was greeted with thunderous acclaim. Portuguese, Irish, and Italian members rose to commit themselves to common action—and the more than 80 black delegates from Boston were proof of the group's ability to forge unity in a badly divided city.

After such high points come the hard work of confronting the entrenched power of business and the political system that has, in recent years, been especially responsive to the demands. The newly elected

President of Fair Share, Mike Regan, a mechanic from Chelsea, ran for election by saying "Bull" to the idea that "nice guys finish last." (That the election was contested showed the lively internal life of the organization.) Indeed, besides adapting the union song "Solidarity Forever" to its needs ("When Fair Share's inspiration through the people's dreams shall run..."), the group has become a force to be reckoned with. It has won reform of auto insurance, telephone rates, property tax evaluation, and tax delinquency policy. It has done these things by involving ordinary people in exuberant direct action—its people use the phrase "more action, more power."

Leaders and staffers of Fair Share realize, however, that neighborhood, city-wide, or even state-wide victories, however hard to achieve, can be undercut by an economy and national policies that penalize working people. Fair Share and other similar groups hope to evolve a national presence through CAOC—the Citizens Action Organizing Committee. (Staffers have been heard to refer to the new and loosely structured group as "CHAOS.") CAOC includes the Connecticut Citizens Action Group, the Illinois Public Action Council, the Ohio Public Interest Campaign, and Oregon Fair Share (formally unrelated to the Massachusetts group). These are all city-based and populist in style. They talk about pitting the "grass roots" against the "politics and policies of both big government and big business." Staff director of Fair Share Michael Ansara, an efficient administrator and organizer, hopefully claims, "The debate on our economic future begins at the grass roots."

Fair Share and its populist companions are not and do not wish to become known as socialists. They have a healthy distaste for political rhetoric that could cut them off from their typically non-socialist base. Instead, they resort to vague formulations about the need for a "restructuring of wealth and power." Socialists who do work in Fair Share wrestle with this ambiguity constantly; some hope Fair Share and the populism it represents, can be the foundation of socialist mass movement. When I asked one energetic staff member if she was a radical, she put it this way: "I don't label myself—it depends on the context. But I believe in organization, that 'more action, more power' works; that people may become more radical through action and organization."

To some extent, however, Fair Share may be captive to its own success. By avoiding socialist principles, by keeping its activity close to the immediately perceived needs of its constituency, by its admirable business-like attitude towards organizing and planning its campaigns, Fair Share is not likely to "evolve" past populism. Friends to Fair Share's left except this; its hostile left critics, on the other hand, have yet to implement their

ideas for mass movements. While historical comparison is always ambiguous, it should be noted that most revolutionary eras have had broad based mass movements as central actors, and that these formations have been distinguished not so much by their ideology as by their choice of alliance at critical junctures.

In the meantime, Fair Share and the citizens' action movement face challenges on their own terms. In the near future Fair Share must determine its relation to electoral activity; it must deal with potentially sectarian rivalries; and most importantly, it must formulate program and alliances that overcome the defensiveness of a consumer orientation.

Fair Share works in an environment where all but a tiny fraction of elected officials are Democrats. But in Massachusetts as elsewhere, the Democratic Party spans the spectrum from the Governor, who is an outright spokesman for manufacturing interests, to liberal reform groups with little power. And, as elsewhere, Massachusetts faces the ability of capital to flee environments where labor and progressives have made advances.

In this context there are few social forces with the popular base and political will to resist attacks on workers' level and quality of life. In the name of the "business climate"—necessary, business argues, to preserve jobs—all initiatives are held hostage. The trade unions have been engaging this struggle, but erratically, and they are divided as well.

Thus, Fair Share is among the few groups with a state-wide base and the resources and will to resist business belligerence on taxing, spending and regulation. In the long run, then, Fair Share must come to some position relative to the electoral arena. Indeed, some observers note that even now Fair Share is, de facto, the largest grass roots political party in the Commonwealth.

The second challenge to Fair Share may not be grave—but it is unsavory, and it has implications for the entire populist movement. The groups that cooperate in CAOC have similar programs—the protection of the interests of low and moderate income people—and each is focused on a given statewide arena. With a highly similar program and spirit, however, ACORN—Associated Communities for Reform Now—is not part of that alliance. ACORN claims to be national in ambition, and it has projects ranging from substantial to insignificant in approximately 15 states. There appears to be both personal and sectarian rivalry among ACORN on one side and the CAOC groups on the other. Recently this has had an ominous result. ACORN has put staff organizers in a couple of the neighborhoods with existing Fair Share chapters. One can imagine the confusion this could create among potential members in a given neighborhood. This is especially striking considering the fact that there are large urbanized states with no significant citizen action groups at all.

Fair Share leaders and senior staff persons tried to dissuade ACORN director Wade Rathke, and ACORN leaders, from taking this initiative—but their efforts failed. Locally, Fair Share organizers are confident this will not be a great problem—for, after all, they have a stable and large organization. But in the long run, and in other places, such competition is bad precedent for the citizen's action movement. Given the pragmatic orientation of such groups, and their programmatic convergence, one would think cooperation and unity would be fairly high priorities.

Looming larger is the structural question, the strategy of organizing people as residents, as consumers of public services. Utility rates, property taxes, anti-arson regulations are defensive struggles. One observer may have exaggerated when he said that even if Fair Share were to win all the campaigns it has discussed, it would barely affect the overall standard of living of its members. Populism now and in the past has tended to focus on the democratic interests of working people and small property owners. By contrast, socialist move-

ments of the working class emphasize the centrality of the role of production relations in determining the level and quality of life of workers. If Massachusetts is deindustrialized, if unionized and relatively skilled manufacturing jobs are replaced with unorganized, low-paid white collar jobs, then public ownership of utilities and fair tax schedules will not be sufficient to protect the livelihood of Fair Share members and their neighbors.

Fair Share people are not ignorant of this larger problem. They participate, for example, in the Massachusetts Coalition to Save Jobs, which is working for legislation to provide for advance notice and severance and community assistance payments by firms closing or laying off large numbers of workers. Such activity has the virtue of raising the relation of community issues with which Fair Share is familiar, in the context of social control of capital flow and jobs. Fair Share president Mike Regan represents the group on the union-led Coalition. He and others in Fair Share are well aware of the larger community effects of job loss—fiscal crisis, service cutbacks, health problems, business leverage over other elements of the progressive program. ■

Bob Ross is a sociologist. He was a founding member of Students for a Democratic Society.

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Libya

Continued from page 7.

and insuring that the costs of energy-saving steps not be borne by the working class.

- Educational efforts to explain just oil pricing for crude oil and the true causes of inflation.

- Shifting financial reserves to new institutions that will aid in Third World development, rather than recycling such funds in the Western banking system.

- Increasing cooperation among Third World countries with respect to industrialization projects, to reduce dependence on the West and the multinationals, and increasing trade between Third World and socialist countries.

- Establishment of a compensation fund to offset increases in the price of imported oil for Third World consumer countries.

- Coordinated work to improve health and safety conditions for oil workers (among the several messages of solidarity sent by the conference—others went to Robert Mugabe and, ironically, to the OCAW in support of the strike—was a telegram to the families of oilworkers killed in the North Sea disaster.)

- Reduction of reliance on foreign technicians, and parallel efforts to reduce the "brain drain" from Third World countries.

- Action to reduce the effects of pollution from oil operations.

One specific proposal that found great support was creating an effective oil em-

bargo on South Africa. Iran's refusal to sell oil to South Africa, announced immediately after the fall of the Shah (an example of political potential of the new international economic order) has left South Africa dependent primarily on oil surreptitiously shipped there. Two groups—one based in the U.S., the other in Holland—discussed ideas for monitoring shipment of oil to South Africa and imposing effective sanctions against agents, shippers and refiners who either sell oil to South Africa or allow their oil to find its way there. (The address of the U.S.-based Sanctions Working Group is c/o Michael Tanzer, 251 W. 86 St., New York, NY 10024.)

The two dozen North American groups invited to the conference included a range of the anti-imperialist left. North American Congress on Latin America, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (Toledo, Ohio), Non-Intervention in Chile, the Black United Front, Earthworks-Center for Rural Studies, the Patrice Lumumba Coalition, Middle East Research and Information Project, National Conference of Black Lawyers, the Union of Radical Political Economists, Southern African Committee, Institute for Food and Development Policy, Friends of the Filipino People, Women's International Resource Exchange, to name just half those represented.

An Indigenous People's delegation, representing the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Six Nations), who travel on passports issued by their own government and have represented their nation at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva and the European Parliament in Strasbourg, made a powerful presentation on the "Ways of Life" of their traditional culture, "charged with the

responsibility to maintain a delicate balance that exists between the two-leggeds and all of our relatives in the natural world. Most importantly, we have always been careful to insure that exploitative relationships did not develop among ourselves and the natural world."

It was an eloquent critique of urbanism, the "development" mentality, technology and "extractive culture," of "people's loss of contact with the spirituality of the Creation," an attempt to root "racism, sexism and the many other processes that perpetuate alienation, oppression and destruction of both the humans and the natural world" in the belief system that places humans as the absolute superior to all other life forms. The full implication of their critique of "progress" seemed not to be comprehended by the wildly cheering audience.

Several of the representatives from the North American groups tried to have inserted in the final conference document a statement on women's rights and equality and the special ways in which women are oppressed by the multinational corporations. There was informal indication that such an amendment, carefully worded and introduced, would be accepted, but unfortunately some of the bad process for which the U.S. left is famous got in the way, and the amendment never reached the floor.

As its final act, the conference established a Permanent Committee (consisting of oilworkers' union representatives from Algeria, Congo, Cuba, France, India, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Rumania, Turkey, USSR and Venezuela), headquartered in Tripoli, with the mandate to work towards implementation of the conference resolutions and plan a followup conference.

In the U.S. contact North American Anti-Monopolist Association, 526 W. 112 St., #51, New York, N.Y. 10025. ■ **Chester Hartman** coordinates the *Planners Network* (a national communications and support group for radical urban planners and community organizers), one of the North American groups invited to the conference described in the above article.

Strike

Continued from page 4.

layoffs, because Harvester lost many orders to competitors during the strike.

Despite the hardships of the strike, worker support stayed remarkably solid. Members at one local even rejected their leaders' suggestion to accept a contract turned down by the Harvester Council. "U.S. workers are the greatest defensive fighters in the world," UAW international representative Carl Shier said of the strikers. "When it comes to keeping their contract, they'll do whatever is necessary."

The strike victory "is a lesson to the corporations," Shier added. "We've introduced a little humanity and we aren't about to let them take it away because some outside consultant tells them it isn't profitable."

By taking its workers out on strike, Harvester also precipitated the closing of the 3,500-employee Wisconsin Steel mill in Chicago. A Harvester subsidiary until 1977, Wisconsin sold a third of its output to Harvester. At the end of March Harvester suddenly withdrew crucial financial support to the new owners of Wisconsin, tiny Envirodyne Industries, and that triggered Chase Manhattan bank's foreclosure on shipments and raw materials that were collateral for its \$35 million loan. Economic Development Administration loan guarantees had been arranged just last fall with Harvester's participation. The terms of that arrangement and the sudden foreclosure have prompted calls for investigation and protests by the surrounding community and the workers, who belong to an independent union. ■

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$10.00 for two insertions and \$5.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

April 28-May 3/Nationwide

Anti-Draft Week activities around the country include registration/conscription resistance and education, films, speakers and debates on the issues of registration, conscription, the defense budget, the arms race and foreign policy. For further information contact: The May 4th Organizing Committee, P.O. Box 431, Arcata, CA 95521, (707) 822-4427.

May 1/Berkeley, CA

Benefit dinner for the **Highlander Research and Education Center** honoring **Rosa Parks** and **Septima Clark**. Hs. Lordships on the Berkeley Marina. Tax deductible tickets \$25.00, available from East Bay Friends of Highlander, 1019 Oxford, Berkeley, CA 94707.

May 1-3/Amherst, MA

The public is invited to a teach-in at the University of Massachusetts on **The Threat of War**. Speakers **Seymour Melman**, **Grace Paley**, **William Worthly**, **Alan Wolfe** and **Cora Weiss** will discuss the new militarism, the draft, energy, the Persian Gulf and resistance movements. Call (413) 545-0359.

May 2-3/Washington, DC

Combatting Racism in the Women's Movement will be the focus of a forum at George Washington University. Speakers include **Anne Braden** and **Terri Clark**. Sponsored by the D.C. Area Feminist Alliance. Contact Nan Hunter at (202) 783-3410 for more information.

Sonoma State Univ., CA

Democracy in the Workplace Conference. The focus is on legislation, labor issues and practical experiences. Speakers include **Jack Blackburn**, **Joe Blasi**, **Martin Carnoy**, **Steve Deutsch**, **David Olsen**, **Carol Pateman**, **Derek Shearer** and others. For information call or write Robert Girling, Dept. of Manage-

ment Studies, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA 94928, (707) 664-2377. Admission is \$5.00

May 2-4/San Francisco, CA

San Francisco NAM will host three events related to the fiscal crisis. **James O'Connor** will speak on **Capital and Class Struggle** on Friday at 8:00 p.m.; **Kapitalstate** will present a workshop on **Struggles in the Public Sector** on Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; and NAM will hold a day-long workshop on **Public Sector Organizing** on Sunday. All events at 29 29th St. For further information, call 221-3333, ext. 153.

May 3/Chicago, IL

Chicago Murals Tour by **Cindy Weiss** for the Second City Socialist School. Meet at 1:30 at the NAM office, 3244 N. Clark, Chicago. \$2.00. Call: (312) 871-7700 for reservations by April 30.

Chicago, IL

The Battle of Chile, Part 3, "The Power of the People." The dramatic conclusion of the most monumental political documentary of our time will be presented on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at Jones Commercial High School, 606 S. State. Donation is \$4.00.

Chicago, IL

Folksinger and labor organizer **Si Kahn** will give a benefit concert for the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at 333 S. Ashland. Call 975-3680 for tickets—\$5.00 in advance and \$6.00 at the door.

Chicago, IL

The public is invited to an Open House to see the **Lakeview Neighborhood Solar Greenhouse**, a community planned and constructed project, at 933 W. George St., 2-5 p.m. Sponsored by Jane Addams Center with assistance from the Center for Neighborhood Technology. For more information, call Marni at 549-1631.

Los Angeles, CA

May Day will be celebrated by singer/activists from the civil rights movement at Fritchman Auditorium, 2936 W. 8th St. Performers include: **Guy Carawan**, **Betty Mae Flies**, **Sam Block**, **Cleo Kennedy**, **Mamie Brown** and **Len Chandler**. A benefit for the Campaign for a Citizens' Police Review Board. Co-sponsored by NAM. \$3.00 admission.

May 4/New York, NY

"A Jewish Agenda for the '80s" will be the theme for Jewish Currents Annual

Dinner with guest speaker **Professor Itche Goldberg**. At 12:30 p.m. at the Roosevelt Hotel, 45th at Madison.

Los Angeles, CA

Remember Jackson/Kent State. No Draft/No U.S. Intervention. Demonstrate at 11:00 a.m. at the Terminal Annex and march to Pershing Square for a rally at 1:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Los Angeles May 4th Coalition. Contact (213) 413-5143.

May 9/San Francisco, CA

Native Americans and Energy Development benefit featuring speakers from the Black Hills Alliance, Southwestern Indian activists, Big Mountain elders (Navajo), and musicians (Navajo acoustic band), **Jim Page** and others. Glide Memorial Church at 8:00 p.m. \$3.50 donation. Contact (415) 848-6302 or 234-5155.

Long Island, NY

A forum on left perspectives on electoral politics in the 1980s will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Massapequa Bar Harbor Library. The panel will include representatives from the Citizens Party, Communist Party, DSOC, NAM, Socialist Party and independent left commentators. Sponsored by Peace Smith House. Call (516) 789-0778, noon to 10:00 p.m.

Chicago, IL

Daniel Ellsberg will be the guest speaker at the Women for Peace annual benefit dinner, Friday at 6:30 p.m., De Paul University, 2324 N. Seminary. The dinner will include musical entertainment and a "meet the guest" cocktail hour. Tickets are \$17.50. Call 663-1227.

May 9-11/Stephentown, NY

The **Berkshire Forum** offers **Blowing Minds—to Pieces**, a vivid probe of the \$50 billion-a-year advertising industry by **Ken Kronenberg**. Write or call for schedule of weekend vacation workshops. Berkshire Forum, Stephenstown, NY 12168; (518) 733-5497.

May 10/Philadelphia, PA

Bach for Bread and Roses. 2nd Annual all Bach program to benefit Bread and Roses Community Fund, raising money for grassroots and activist groups in the Philadelphia area. Special guest, **Maggie Kuhn**. Reception following. At 8:00 p.m. at the Old Pine Church, 4th and Pine Streets. Tickets \$6.00. Call (215) 563-0638.

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PERSPECTIVES

Is Soviet military strength greater than American?

By Steve Johnson

THE AMERICAN RESPONSE TO TROUBLE AROUND THE world, and to a loss of American economic power and prestige has traditionally been to send out the troops. The same response is now being formulated by American policy makers, in the form of increasing defense spending and reinstating the draft. This cold war policy will no longer work. The major arguments used to support the current American government plans are that the Soviets spend more money on defense than the U.S., and as a result their military strength is greater than the U.S.

Let us look at the premise that military spending is larger in the Soviet Union than it is in the U.S. A recent CIA report is a good example of what we are currently hearing about Soviet military spending. The report, released in January 1980, claims that the Soviets have been spending at a rate approximately 30 percent higher than the U.S. for the last decade. Soviet defense expenditures are reported to be \$165 billion for 1980.

The actual level of Soviet military expenditures is not known with any accuracy. This can be shown by two important omissions in the CIA report.

The CIA arrives at the Soviet figure by a method called "Estimated Dollar Costs of Soviet Defense Programs." This method is calculated by spying on the Soviet military in order to determine its components. The question is then asked, "What would it cost the U.S. to develop the same military?" Using U.S. methods of defense procurement, a dollar figure is arrived at. The dollar figure is converted to rubles using differing estimates of how dollars would convert to rubles within the Soviet economy.

This method of estimation is admitted by experts using it to have a wide margin of error. For example, after President Carter took office as a pro-detente candidate, the CIA revised their estimate of Soviet defense expenditures upward over 25 percent.

The results of estimating Soviet defense expenditures differ vastly from one agency to another. In 1975, the most current year for which all estimates are available, the range of estimates varied by \$63 billion. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the best known independent organization researching world military expenditures, estimated Soviet military spending to be \$61 billion. The International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, publishers of the standard reference text, *The Military Balance*, put Soviet spending at \$124 billion. The two U.S. government agencies that produce yearly estimates, the CIA and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency both fell within this range, but even they varied by \$5 billion.

The second omission of the CIA report is an explanation of what composes U.S. defense expenditures during the period under study. According to the U.S. government Office of Management and Budget, the current defense budget, fiscal year 1980, budgets to the Department of Defense \$138.2 billion. This figure is most often compared to the current estimate of \$165 billion for the Soviets. However, not included in the Department of Defense budget are military expenditures for: Civil Defense, \$2.8 billion; military exploration of space, \$4.7 billion; foreign military assistance, \$0.5 billion; the U.S. Coast Guard, \$1.0 billion; and Veterans Administration, \$20.5 billion. The addition of these expenditures raises the real U.S. military budget

to \$167.7 billion.

In addition, the U.S. makes a yearly payment of interest on the national debt. According to the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 60 percent of that interest payment is a result of debts incurred in past wars and represents a current military payment for old wars. For fiscal 1980, interest on military debts will cost us \$35 billion.

Neither the Soviet nor the American defense budgets can be viewed with simplicity. There is currently no accurate method available for comparing them. The validity of today's estimates is very much in doubt.

There are tremendous political forces underlying the statement of any figure. With the current high levels of world tension we need to be careful about believing any figures put out by politicians or leaders in the U.S. or the Soviet Union.

Who's bigger?

The media has been full of statements about the size of the Soviet armed forces. According to the reference book, *The Military Balance*, the Soviet armed forces are composed of 2.7 million regular troops and one half million border and security guards. U.S. armed forces are composed of slightly over two million regular troops. Our border and security forces are organized by independent agencies rather than under the military.

When these forces are broken down into their components an interesting picture comes to light. The U.S. has more mili-

tary personnel organized for global deployment than does the Soviet Union. The U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force are each larger than their Soviet counterparts.

The Soviet navy has 433,000 people, including 12,000 in their marine corps. The U.S. has 524,000 in the navy. In addition, the U.S. has 184,000 marines. The Soviet air force has 475,000 people; the U.S. air force has 563,000.

The largest difference between the Soviets and the U.S. is in the army. The Soviets have an army of 1.8 million and the U.S. has an army of 750,000. However, over two-thirds of the Soviet army is stationed in border areas or defensive zones on the perimeter of the Soviet Union or within the Warsaw Pact Countries of Eastern Europe.

The U.S., on the other hand, has no troops committed to our land borders with Mexico or Canada, but instead has 480,000 troops stationed on over 100 bases and installations around the world.

Not only is the Soviet army organized differently than the U.S. Army, but so is the Soviet navy. The Soviets have two aircraft carriers and a total of 870 combat naval aircraft. Most of these aircraft are land-based or are helicopters designed to guard against submarines off the shores of the Soviet Union.

The U.S. has 13 aircraft carriers and 1,100 combat aircraft on these carriers alone. In addition, the Navy has 260 land-based submarine-hunting aircraft, over 300 anti-submarine helicopters and 140 support aircraft, primarily transports.

The same sort of defensive versus offensive capability exists between the Soviet and the U.S. air forces. The Soviets have 16 tactical air armies. Four of these are based in Eastern Europe and the remaining 12 are based one in each of the military districts inside the Soviet Union.

The U.S. Air Force is broken down into squadrons instead of armies and is composed of 172 squadrons of different sorts, including 81 fighter aircraft squadrons. Twenty-eight of these squadrons, and two airlift squadrons, are stationed in Europe as part of NATO. In the Pacific the U.S. has 12 squadrons. In addition, the U.S. has squadrons based in Alaska

and Hawaii.

Comparing the U.S. military to the Soviet's is in many ways like comparing beans and buttons. What is important is not the total number of military personnel, nor the money spent on the military, but how that military is organized and deployed and what that military is capable of achieving.

The U.S. has built a largely offensive military and has, including the average deployment of naval vessels around the world, approximately 750,000 troops on station worldwide. The Soviet military is organized into more of a defensive force with the major commitment of all three services to the defense of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.

That is not to say that the Soviet military is not capable of offensive action, as recent events in Afghanistan clearly prove. Nor is it to condone Russian invasions in Eastern Europe. The point is that while Soviet aggression is being used to sway Congress and the public to support larger defense budgets and a return to the draft, the U.S. already has a globally deployed military second to none. It is no doubt true that our current military is not capable of combating the Soviets in Central Asia or inside a country that borders the Soviet Union, such as Pakistan. On the other hand, the U.S. would be more than a match for the Soviets in any other theater in the world. The Soviets would have no chance of fighting the U.S. inside any of the countries that border, or are close to, the U.S.

A solution to the problems of Afghanistan or Iran cannot be achieved by increasing military spending or the draft. The economic and political problems facing the U.S. around the world are primarily those competing countries and movements for political independence. To oppose these changes militarily rather than to concentrate on our economic and political strengths will lead to economic disaster or war. War today carries with it the risk of escalation, with both the U.S. and the Soviet Union capable of destroying the world.

Stephen M. Johnson is writing a dissertation on the politics of foreign military sales at the University of Oregon.

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Sartre

Continued from page 16.

the USSR. But the Cold War deepened, creating a tension and sense of imminent catastrophe much stronger in France than in the U.S., where McCarthyism was rampant. Albert Camus thought of emigrating to escape the Red Army. Despite the unfriendly treatment he had received from the PCF up to then, in 1951 Sartre revolted against the excesses of anti-communism and began his fellow traveling period in support of the communist peace campaign. He plunged into the study of Marxism. In 1954 he made a first trip to the USSR, where the Russians nearly killed him with vodka. In 1956 he publicly condemned the Soviet intervention in Hungary. The honeymoon was over. He said later of that period of cooperation with the French Communist Party: "I was dealing with people who accepted as comrades only members of their party, who were loaded down with instructions and taboos, who saw me as a temporary fellow traveler and were already thinking in terms of the future moment when I would get lost in the scuffle, recovered by the right."

Increased involvement.

On the contrary, it was after his break with the PCF that he got into his most significant political involvement, against the French colonial war and use of torture in Algeria.

In 1958 he came to grips with Marxism and undermined his health with amphetamines feverishly writing his *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*.

In 1960, Sartre came out with a strong public defense of the "suitcase carriers," the network of French intellectuals organized by Francis Jeanson to facilitate the clandestine travels of Algerian revolutionary leaders. De Gaulle reportedly stopped his police from arresting Sartre with these words: "Leave the intellec-

tuals alone. One doesn't arrest Voltaire."

Sartre was very wary of the multiple seductions by which the powers that be recuperate intellectuals of renown to their own ends. When Sartre asked De Gaulle for permission to hold Russell Tribunal hearings in France, De Gaulle sent Sartre an evasive reply opening "Cher Maître," as one addresses one's teacher. Sartre retorted that he was called "Maître" by "café waiters who know that I write." The philosopher's insolence measured the president's cynicism. The Bertrand Russell Tribunal on American war crimes in Vietnam was held in Stockholm in 1967 with Sartre presiding.

In May '68, Sartre rushed to join the students in the Sorbonne. He reacted indignantly to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, urging the European left to study the Soviet system and re-examine its own objectives and ways of organization "to make sure the coming revolution doesn't give birth to that socialism." He went into his *gauchiste* period alongside the peculiarly French "spontaneous Maoists" who tried to break through the factory bosses' private police and the CPF guards to make contact with the workers. In 1972, he was thrown out of the Renault auto plant parking lot. He used his prestige to save revolutionary newspapers such as *La Cause de Peuple* from being banned by the government. In 1973 he helped found the newspaper *Liberation*, which is the most successful survivor of that turbulent period. That year, his vision failed drastically, suddenly cutting him off from words on paper.

Unable to write, he gave interviews, continued to take stands and sign most of the petitions for humanitarian causes circulated among French intellectuals. Revulsion against Nazi anti-semitism made both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir ardent defenders of Israel, but in recent years Sartre also urged his "Israeli friends" to dialogue with the Palestinians. Last year, he supported aid to the Vietnamese boat people. He signed petitions against oppression in the Soviet Union, Argentina, West Germany, Morocco, Spain—just about everywhere, including France.

Wasn't it absurd to sign so many petitions? Well yes, and so what? Everyone with a petition would ask Sartre to sign it, and fear of being absurd was not for him an effective intimidation. And if he made a mistake, defended a cause that wasn't all that pure? Well, that wasn't disastrous either. Jean-Paul Sartre understood very well that he had no power, no army, no jails, and the positions he took were always against powers with plenty of means at their disposal to defend themselves against both error and truth. The role of the gadfly is not to be right all the time but to call attention to a problem. At least, this was all he could do in his last years, his struggle to keep in touch with the world enfeebled by his failing health and dimmed by blindness. But he stayed with it practically to the end. Last fall, although a physical wreck, he joined the crowd that accompanied the body of Jewish leftist writer Pierre Goldman, assassinated by an unidentified organization calling itself "Honor of the Police," to Pere Lachaise cemetery. When he died, the gay review

Gai Pied was on the newsstands with an interview with Sartre analyzing homosexuality.

Sartre's reputation, as writer and honest man, is immense throughout Europe. He was particularly fond of Italy, where he spent his summers and where intellectuals' efforts to relate to the masses do not encounter the same obstacles. Rossana Rossanda said she thought that "to Sartre, who was never a party man, the Italian Communist Party looked like, not the best, but the least worst party possible."

Sartre discovered late in life that he had always been an anarchist without knowing it. "I discovered through philosophy the anarchist that was in me." Politically and philosophically, Sartre did not believe in systems, except as temporary frameworks of analysis to demolish other systems. He was consistently for the underdog, the victim, the oppressed, against power structures, and he tried not to be taken in by their lies.

In a published interview with his lifelong companion Simone de Beauvoir, he said he preferred the company of women because they are "less comic" than men, who are more led by their social roles to take themselves seriously. "Men are more easily taken in, more easily comic. Male society is a comic society. Women, as oppressed people, are almost more free in a certain sense than men. Women have fewer principles dictating their behavior, they are more disrespectful."

Sartre said he didn't mind having wrecked his health writing his *Criticism of Dialectic Reason*, because "what else is health for?" It was his effort to get at Marxism from the inside, to carry his subjectivity into the heart of its philosophical structures, to bring its analysis of material economic and historical reality to terms with the freedom of consciousness that was his own personal experience. Living in France, he was faced with the problem of the separation between that experience and "the enormous and sombre masses of working people who lived and practiced Marxism."

Finally, it seems ridiculous to talk about Sartre and Sartre's times when he did it so well himself. People who want to understand will continue to read Sartre—unless or until the human race finally cretinizes itself or blows itself up.

He was the most lucid about himself, his painful ugliness, the childhood illusions that pushed him to be a writer and that he dissected with rare poetry in *Les Mots* (Words). After demolishing the whole subtle mythology that propelled him towards literary immortality, he concluded: "What I like about my madness is that it protected me, right from the start, against the seductions of the 'elite.' I never thought of myself as the happy proprietor of a 'talent.' My only concern was to save myself—nothing in my hands, nothing in my pockets—by works and faith. This pure choice did not lift me above anyone; without equipment or tools I set myself wholly to the task to save myself wholly. If now I must put away that impossible salvation among other props in the storeroom, what is left? A whole person made of all the rest and worth the same as all or any of them."

Primary



Continued from page 5.

dusty or have some other single reason for granting their endorsement. "They [pro-Carter unions] have all got their one lousy, little issue, usually a bill in Congress," a Machinists official said, "and when you ask them what about the rest, they get embarrassed."

Beyond the primaries.

Some union leaders who endorsed Carter early are now reportedly upset with his recent policies. The national accord with the AFL-CIO, designed by the administration to neutralize labor politically, is threatened and AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland is leading a broad coalition fighting the budget cuts Carter has proposed. Several unions are contemplating fights against Carter policies in the platform debates at the convention, and there are possibilities that some pro-Kennedy unions may stay neutral in the elections or at least devote most of their money and people to Senate and House races.

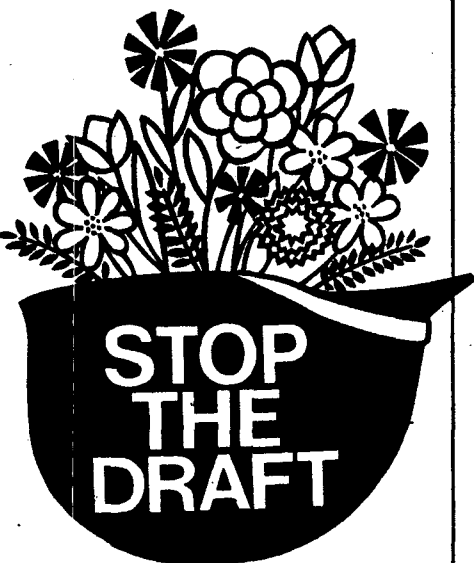
Even some Kennedy backers are seeing the campaign as an opportunity to push Kennedy and the electorate forward on certain issues. Although Kennedy has given passing support to the Ford-Riegle bill to control plant closings, he has not taken advantage of that issue in his campaign. The UAW, however, is pushing the issue of economic dislocation in its Kennedy campaigning. "We're trying to model this campaign around the deeper issues we're concerned with," Tucker says.

Kennedy, while continuing to hit hard on inflation, has come to emphasize even more the constriction of high interest rates on home ownership, construction and business expansion—and is picking up some worried construction worker support as a result. he has also emphasized more heavily Carter's budget cuts, and in Pennsylvania repeatedly charged that the administration was reducing the number of occupational safety and health inspections.

"I'm sick of inflation," textile union member Martha Tragon, 50, said. "I'm trying to sell my home. You think I can with these interest rates?" Plumber union official David Merriman had been for Carter but was moving toward Kennedy because he'd been thinking about the interest rates and the effect that's going to have on construction a year from now. Chocolate Workers local vice-president John Breidegam from Hershey, near Three Mile Island, thought Kennedy's anti-nuclear stance helped in his local, since "most of our people are anti-nuclear."

The labor drift toward Kennedy is slow but perceptible. It could grow increasingly important in the big industrial states remaining in the primary, especially as the already aching economy feels the pinch even more. But it all may be happening too late for Kennedy to benefit.

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By Adam Nussenbaum

Richard Nixon's clumsy fall from grace in 1974 helped revive a latent interest in the saga of Alger Hiss, the man he helped railroad to prison in 1950. Yet, the recent trend in Hiss scholarship—the compulsion to establish Hiss' guilt or innocence—proceeds in the wrong direction. As David Hollinger has pointed out, historians are unlike jurors in that they do not confront an either/or situation; it is their responsibility to assess the Hiss case from a broader perspective. John Lowenthal's *The Trials of Alger Hiss*, a powerful, engrossing documentary that opened at New York's Embassy 72nd St. Theater on March 9, is a step in the right historical direction.

Rutgers law professor John Lowenthal and his editor Marion Kraft have constructed a 166-minute documentary from old film clips (drawn heavily from the Movietone newsreels) and contemporary interviews Lowenthal conducted in 1977 and 1978. The result is a skillfully crafted montage that captures the flavor of the times and helps illustrate that, whether guilty or innocent, it was impossible for Alger Hiss to have received a fair trial.

FILM

Trials of Alger Hiss recaptures hysteria of the McCarthy era

Lowenthal's choice of medium has greatly enhanced his ability to capture the fear of Communism in post-World War II America. Through the observation of gestures, facial expressions and voice inflections (what lawyers term "demeanor evidence"), the film audience is better able to assay the principal characters in the case. When Congressman Nixon thrusts out his chest and proudly asserts to the American people, "I believe in congressional investigations," one realizes that he not only had faith in them—he clearly enjoyed them. Another figure who apparently relished the excitement of the investigation was Reverend John Cronin, a Catholic priest engaging in the un-Christian practice of passing confi-

dential FBI data to friends in positions of power. Cronin cannot hide a gleeful smirk as he tells of "informally" giving Nixon information on Hiss so that the congressman could play with a "stacked deck" when he first confronted the accused.

Chambers' image is, in a word, repulsive. His slovenly appearance and slobbering monotone make it difficult to picture him as, to quote Murray Kempton, "a figure of romance." When Chambers draws to reporters, "I am a man who...step by step is destroying himself so that this nation may continue to exist," we better understand Malcolm Cowley's statement: "I wouldn't convict a mangy dog on Chambers' testimony."

Charming, witty, and articu-

late, Hiss to this day faces the public with uncanny aplomb. Through footage of President Roosevelt, Lowenthal draws an interesting parallel between the compellingly self-assured FDR and Hiss, a strong admirer of his former boss and a firm believer in the ideological innocence of the New Deal. This segment makes it evident that Hiss came to personify the New Deal and that, in the words of Alistair Cooke, "a generation was on trial" when Hiss took the stand in 1950.

No one who has devoted 30 years of his life to an event as significant as the Hiss case can remain unbiased, and Lowenthal is no exception. Yet Lowenthal's biases, unlike those of many of his contemporaries, do not interfere with the ultimate purpose of his work, to depict the political climate in which Hiss was tried and convicted.

Interviews.

Alger Hiss' first perjury trial ended in a hung jury, but at his second trial he was convicted and sentenced to five years in prison. Lowenthal's interviews with jurors Vincent Shaw (a member of the hung jury) and Gussie Feinstein (a member of the convicting jury) are particularly revealing. When Low-

enthal confronts the two jurors with the finding that the FBI suppressed evidence that would have been helpful to Hiss (sworn self confessions of "numerous homosexual activities") by Chambers, FBI documents expressing doubt that the Woodstock in the courtroom belonged to Hiss) while ensuring the presence of evidence that would guarantee Hiss' conviction, Feinstein responds, "We were hoodwinked...the jurors were hoodwinked."

Both jurors recollect going home and reading the papers every day ("You couldn't help seeing them," remarks Shaw). In addition, Feinstein remembers accompanying the forelady of her jury to the house of an acquaintance, who had served on the hung jury, in order to discuss the case.

Why didn't either judge demand the sequestering of the jurors? The fact that the Smith Act Trials of 11 Communist leaders were simultaneously occurring in the same Foley Square courthouse makes this neglect all the more striking. It is no wonder that Feinstein matter-of-factly states, "We had no choice but to find him guilty."

Adam Nussenbaum is a student in American history at the University of Pennsylvania.

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EVENTS

MIDWEST MARXIST SCHOLARS CONFERENCE, Fifth Annual, May 1-4, University of Minnesota. The Scholar as an Ally of Labor: The Role of Education, Culture, and Technology in the Class Struggle. Sessions on Plant Closings, Women and Class, Racism and Class-Consciousness; Cultural Evening with Meridel LeSueur, Tom McGrath, Margaret Burroughs and Kristin Lems. Newest books: U.S. Educational System: Marxist Approaches and Philosophical Problems in Physical Science. For information & book lists: Marxist Educational Press, Anthropology Dept., Univ. of Minn., Minneapolis, MN 55455; (612)378-9462 or 922-7993.

WRITERS AND POETS, a 13-day workshop in Santa Cruz, CA, June 22-July 5, 1980. Speakers: Tillie Olsen and Alice Walker. Scholarships available. Information: Women's Voices, Box 1, c/o Marcy Alancraig, Coordinator, 1153 Camelia St., Berkeley, CA 94702.

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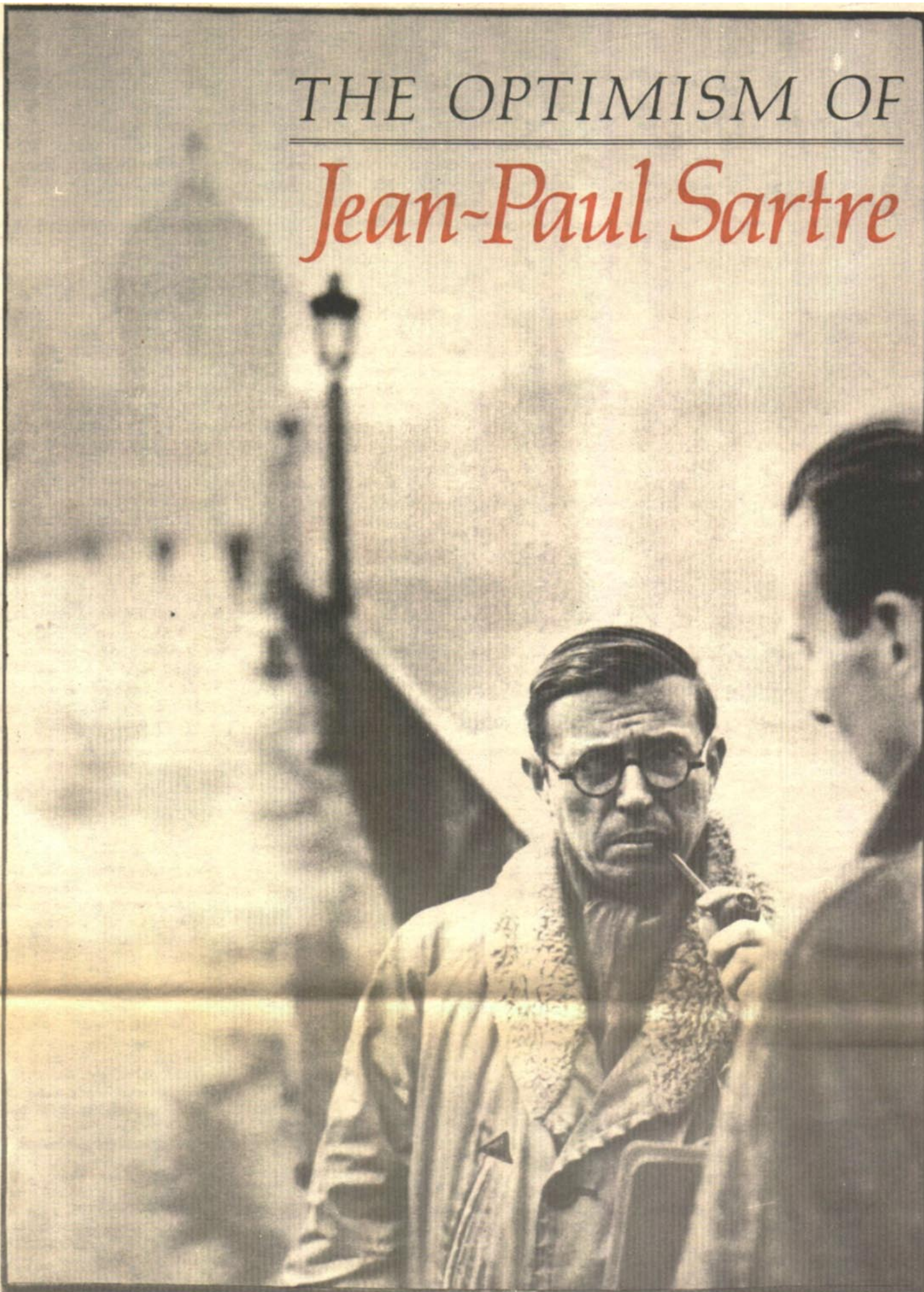
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THE OPTIMISM OF Jean-Paul Sartre

Henri Cartier-Bresson



BY DIANA JOHNSTONE

PARIS

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE WROTE PHILOSOPHY, plays, novels, essays, literary criticism and articles that will last as long as such things do. When he died on April 15 at the age of 74, his work did not yet show any sign of following him to the grave. But if in France and Europe he is being compared with Voltaire and Victor Hugo as the man who most bore witness to his century, it is not only for the literary monument he left behind, but also for his tenacious attachment to the times in which he lived, the mortality of involvement in messy events as well as the immortality of words on paper. Sartre was allotted a century lacking the elegance or passion of those embodied by his illustrious predecessors, but strewn with nasty traps that he attempted to spot, not without falling into a few along the way. The Sartre who lived with his times is the one who is dead and deserves a parting tribute.

Sartre the writer has always been easier for Americans to appreciate than Sartre *l'homme engagé*, the politically committed intellectual. All that filtered across the Atlantic was a vague impression of gratuitous hostility. *The Washington Post* offered the simple, and false, explanation: Sartre was "always a Communist." The abyss of misunderstanding is deep and willful.

Everyone acts in a particular space, a

particular time. Sartre's way of relating to time and space was European, Parisian. When he visited the U.S., he felt the difference. "Here, everyone is free, not to criticize or change things, but to run away from them, go off into the wilderness or move to another town." In American cities, streets are numbered and lettered alphabetically so that you always know where you are, but it hardly matters, one place is so like another. "There is no valid excuse for me to be in one place rather than another..."

In the U.S., the Sartrean type of political protest seems gratuitous. Europeans are much more tightly inserted into the world, and feel it differently. The European right loathes Sartre, but could never ignore him as America can ignore its gadflies. In Sartre's time and place, it was normal for a philosophy professor,

a writer, to express his views on major issues—his opinions might be (and were) offensive, but it was his proper role to make them known.

The aptitude of French intellectuals to judge public issues stems from the assumption, not that they are smarter than other people, but rather that they are more likely to be moved by unselfish concern for the truth than other privileged categories who habitually use their public voice to protect their material interests or extend their power. And this assumption is rooted in history, because it has happened that intellectuals in France have, as in the Dreyfus case, defended innocent victims and brought the truth to light against the lies of the powerful and the prejudices of the ignorant. It is also rooted in the historical rise of the bourgeoisie, which nourished and

protected the growth of a "lay clergy" of rationalist philosophers and teachers devoted to republican virtues to defeat the Church and the monarchy on the ideological battlefield. Events of the twentieth century made the bourgeoisie's manipulation of its republican philosophers more obvious to those as lucid as Sartre, while the working class movement laid out a new set of pitfalls.

AT THE SIGNING OF THE Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939, Sartre wrote in a note book, "This has cured me of socialism, if I had any need to be cured." He hadn't. It was World War II that jolted Sartre and his friend Simone de Beauvoir out of their absorption in literature and philosophy, turning their attention towards social and political problems. The free choice of this necessary involvement was a theme of the "existentialism" that made Sartre world famous in the years just after the war. In the first issue of his review *Le Temps Modernes* in October 1945, Sartre summed up the situation of France at the end of a war poisoned by the threat of yet another war even worse than the last. The little bomb dropped on Hiroshima "suddenly puts us face to face with our responsibilities. Next time, the earth can blow up."

"Should we give up trying to construct peace...because our country has lost much of its power, because the possibility that the earth may commit suicide casts a subtle cloud of nothingness over everything we do? Quite the contrary," Sartre wrote. He argued against friends who felt that only citizens of the victorious giants, only Russians and Americans had any role left to play, any power over events. France, he said, "is our concrete situation, our opportunity, our only chance... And if we decide to take our chance on life, for our friends, for ourselves, we have to take our chance on France, and commit ourselves to finding a place for France in this tough world, this humanity in danger of death. We have to take our chance on this earth, even if some day it may break in pieces. Simply because we are here."

In a characteristic distortion, Sartre was popularly portrayed as the "existentialist prophet of anguish and despair," when on the contrary he was the advocate of a certain optimistic involvement (because involvement is always optimistic) against the demobilizing anguish and despair he perceived all around him. In a recent interview with Benny Levy, Sartre said he himself had never experienced "despair" or "anguish," that he picked up the terms from Kierkegaard (whom he didn't like) and other philosophers, taking their word for it. He vaguely assumed that it was just some shortcoming in his self-knowledge that made the terms abstract to him.

Sartre added that a lot of philosophers, when they talk of a philosophical idea like despair, "go by hearsay in the early stages of their philosophy, giving the idea a lot of weight, and then little by little they stop talking about it because they realize it means nothing to them, they got it from others." But few philosophers have ever been so frank about such realizations.

Sartre was notoriously generous, a soft touch for every moocher in Montparnasse. Money fled from his hands. He spent it on friends, travel, cafes. The apartments he lived in were little more than places to store books. He was not acquisitive, disdained honors (he warned the Swedish Academy in advance that he would not accept the Nobel Prize, but they tried to award it to him anyway in 1964), and had no taste for power. He was a real philosopher, a sage, a happy man, in that all he ultimately demanded from reality was to observe it, think about it, try to understand it and write about it.

Sartre's first political affinities were with Trotskyists, whose influence in French intellectual circles is in proportion to the French Communist Party's traditional distrust of intellectuals. He tried unsuccessfully in 1948 to help set up a "third force" called the Democratic Revolutionary Rally to try to get France to mediate between the U.S. and

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